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THE MONTH

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PIUS XII

The Paradox of the Pope

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NOTES ON SOME CONTRIBUTORS

EDWARD SARMIENTO is Reader in Spanish and Latin American Studies at the University of Durham, and a contributor to *Blackfriars*, *The Tablet*, etc.

WALTER J. ONG holds a Guggenheim Fellowship and is doing research work on Renaissance literature in France.

G. B. HARRISON, formerly Reader in English Literature, University of London, is now Professor of English at the University of Michigan. He edited the Penguin edition of Shakespeare, and his publications include *England in Shakespeare's Day*, *A Jacobean Journal 1603-1606*, etc.

E. B. STRAUSS is physician for psychological medicine at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and lecturer in psychological medicine at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School (University of London).

M. A. MACCONAILL is Professor of Anatomy at University College, Cork.

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The Month is edited from 114 Mount Street, W.1, GROsvenor 2995, and published by Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 6 & 7 Clifford Street, London, W.1. Subscriptions may be addressed to any bookseller, or, in Great Britain, direct to the publishers; in U.S.A. to British Publications, Inc., 30 East 60th Street, New York 22, N.Y.; in France to W. H. Smith & Son, 248 Rue de Rivoli, Paris 1. The annual subscription is 30s., U.S.A. \$5.

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PIUS XII

The Paradox of the Pope

By

GRAHAM GREENE

IT IS STRANGE to come on a monument to a living man, for even the greatest usually appear only on tablets and tombstones after death, but if we suppose a close observer wandering through the yellow squares, the churches and the *trattorie*, among the fountains and flower-stalls and broken columns of Rome, he would notice here and there about the city the memorials to a man still living, Eugenio Pacelli: in an obscure side street, on the wall of a house that has come down in the world—"In this house was born . . .": in the hall of a school—"Student of this Lyceum during the years . . .": at the entrance of a church—"Here he meditated upon the choice of his vocation . . .": Pope Pius XII mummified in marble before his death.

Our imaginary observer might well wonder at this great harvest of tablets. For it is not enough to say that Pacelli is the Pope. There have been so many Popes. They stretch away like a column of ants, busy about affairs that have often seemed to the world of small importance. An odd anonymity shrouds the greater number of them—we don't remember them as we remember Kings, or even as we remember Presidents. Their titles, stiff and unoriginal, have a kind of text book air. Pacelli becomes Pius XII and already he seems fixed on a page of history (rather dull history) with all the other Piuses (who were they?), fixed like a butterfly on cork, pinned out for dusty preservation.

A few Popes, even to such a Protestant schoolboy as I was, broke through their anonymity; generally because they clashed with Kings or Emperors who were the more interesting characters since they wore armour and swore great blinding oaths and made wars and memorable sayings. The only memorable saying of a Pope that we learnt at school was far too smug—Gregory the

Great, remarking, "Non angli sed angeli" at the sight of the young blond British slaves. One remembered too Innocent III fulminating against King John, though his victory over the King seemed a bit underhand; corpses lying unburied because of the interdict did not seem to compare in chivalry with burning lead. The Emperor Henry knelt in the snow at Canossa and our sympathy was always with the Emperor (already I have forgotten which was the Pope he knelt to). Pius V (was it?) excommunicated Queen Elizabeth, Pio Nono fled from Rome conquered by Garibaldi and his romantic Red Shirts. And of course there were the wicked Popes—Alexander VI (the Borgia) and John XXII (I was taught for some reason that it was very wicked to celebrate Mass in a stable, though in our day Masses have been celebrated in places quite as strange, in garages, peasants' huts, at a Russian breakfast table).

One knew very little about the living Pope in England in those days just after the First World War. He was associated rather disagreeably with a peace offer the Allies had rejected. We were the victorious powers, or so we thought, so there was a somewhat disreputable air about premature peace offers, and in any case to the young, peace has small appeal. Our history books dealt mainly with wars, and as for any peace that passes understanding, it was not in any school or University curriculum.

I don't think it ever occurred to us that the Pope was a priest, or that he could be a saint. A priest was a small sour man in black who had a tin-roofed church in a back street of the country town where one lived: his congregation consisted mainly, so one was told, of Irish servant girls, and he was never invited to dinner as the vicar was. But still, he was a human being and had no connection with the out-dated tiaraed ruler in Rome. I remember the shock of surprise at seeing a box inside a Roman Catholic church marked Peter's Pence—I thought that all that had been stopped sometime in the Middle Ages, probably by King John.

But even later when I became a Catholic the Pope remained a distant hierarchic figure, and one imagines he remained so for many Catholics until contemporary history began to break into our homes with the sound of explosives and the sight of refugees and the sudden uncertainty—where shall we be next year? The Pope became a man when we grew aware that he

suffered from the same anxieties and tensions as ourselves, only infinitely extended by his responsibility and his solitude. When Pius XI was elected on the fourteenth ballot, the Cardinal Primate of Hungary is reported to have said, "We have dragged Ratti through the fourteen Stations of the Cross: now that he has arrived on Golgotha we leave him alone." For nearly twenty years now we have become aware of the Papacy as the point of suffering, the needle of pain, and a certain love always arises for the man who suffers. Pain makes an individual, whether it is a Chinese woman weeping for her dead child or the patient figure in the hospital bed or this man in the Vatican.

We have worked slowly towards the one particular Pope—this priest, not so far removed from our parish priest, forced against his will into a position of responsibility without material power, but we cannot see him fully as an individual man unless we see him in relation to his immediate predecessors. They have all had the same aim—to be the servants of the servants of God, to serve the world, to temper the winds of hate, corruption, injustice, to give us such peace as it is possible to get here. Pacelli becomes individual when we see how he differs from the others in trying to attain this aim.

Since the days of Pius X that word Peace seems to chime through all the encyclicals and papal letters and speeches, as it chimes through the Mass so that we become accustomed to it in its every declension, *pax*, *pacis*, *pacem*. Pius X was Pope when the First World War broke out. When he was asked to bless some armaments, he replied, "War! I don't want war, I don't bless war, I bless only peace. Gladly I would sacrifice my life to obtain peace." A fortnight after war was declared he was dead.

Benedict XV, his successor, whose peace proposals in 1917 were rejected, who was called Papa Bosch by the French and "the French Pope" by the Germans, said, "They want to silence me, but they shall not succeed in sealing my lips; nobody shall prevent me from calling to my own children, peace, peace, peace." And his successor, to whom he said these words, Pius XI remarked to an English Archbishop as the alignment for the new Hitlerian war became evident, "Peace is such a precious good that one should not fear to buy it even at the price of silence and concessions, although never at the price of weakness."

The world has darkened progressively since those days. Pius X

was an old man ready to give his life, but a prayer is not always answered as we want it answered. Benedict believed in reasoned diplomacy and failed. Pius XI believed in a mixture of shrewdness and pugnacity, and he failed too. Now a new note sounds from the man who was his Secretary of State and who from that inner position saw the shrewdness and pugnacity outwitted, and observed the limits of diplomacy. Isn't there a hint of despair, so far as this world is concerned, in Pacelli when he speaks of "Golgotha—that hill of long awaited peace between Heaven and earth"? Sometimes we almost feel he is abandoning those vast hordes of people we call nations, the dealings with the War Lords and Dictators, and like a parish priest in the confessional, a *curé d'Ars*, he is concentrating on each individual, teaching the individual that peace can be found on Golgotha, that pain doesn't matter, teaching the difficult lesson of love, dwelling on the liturgy of the Church while the storm rages—the storm will pass. In 1943, the year of the North African campaign, and the final disaster to the Italian Armies, he issued two encyclicals—on "The Mystical Body of Jesus Christ" and on "Biblical Studies." They must have seemed to the Italian people very far removed from their immediate worries, but those worries pass, and the subject of the encyclicals goes on as long as human life.

And yet, one cannot help exclaiming in parentheses, if only they were more readable: less staid, tight, pedantic in style. I doubt whether many of the laity read these encyclicals and yet they are addressed by form "to all the clergy and faithful of the Catholic world." The abstract words, the sense of distance, the lack of fire make them rather like a leading article in a newspaper: the words have been current too long. There are no surprises. "As it is by faith that on this earth we adhere to God as the source of truth, so it is by virtue of Christian hope that we seek Him as the source of beatitude." The words have no bite, no sting, no concrete image: we feel that a man is dictating to a dictaphone. Compare the encyclicals with such writing as St. Francis de Sales, using his chaste elephant or his bees as metaphors, arousing our attention with a startling image: "My tongue, while I speak of my neighbour, is in my mouth like a lancet in the hand of the surgeon, who wishes to make an incision between the nerves and sinews: the incision that I make with my tongue must be so exact that I say neither more nor less than the truth." In the

encyclicals the incision has not been made: the words clothe the thought as stiffly as a plaster cast on an injured limb.

Not all the Popes have been quite so dry or cautious in their encyclicals—Leo XIII in his *Rerum Novarum* wrote with a kind of holy savagery on the abuse of property (didn't the Bishop of San Luis Potosi in Mexico preserve the copies in his cellar till the revolution for fear of offending the rich?) and Pius XI, attacking the Hitlerian State in *Mit Brennender Sorge* allowed the personal tone of voice to be heard.

But a Pope—or a saint or a parish priest—is not necessarily a writer, and in any case many—if not most—of Pacelli's encyclicals are not personally written by himself, only very carefully revised and approved. (The comparison with a newspaper article is reasonably apt. One can always tell for example which leader in the *London Times* is written by the Editor: there is a masterfulness, a lack of caution—not the same as lack of prudence—which appears also in the encyclicals of Pius XI who was usually his own author.) I express, of course, a private opinion based on translations. One distinguished writer has compared the Pope's style to the Roman fountains, formal even in their ornateness, the Latin words, colourless as water but pure and exact, falling with certainty into the ageless basins—Roman? Renaissance? Is his formality closer perhaps to music than literature? Bossuet, Dante, St. Augustine—these are among the very few literary references that occur in his writing, but he speaks with real understanding of music. Again one is reminded of many parish priests whose worldly interests seem narrowed by the love of God to a few books and the enjoyment of classical music.

This is the essential paradox in a Pope whom so many of us believe will rank among the greatest. Among the gossipers of Rome he is often described as a priest first and a diplomat afterwards. But how was it with his background that he did not become a diplomat first and foremost? He belongs to an aristocratic Roman family. Although his own inclinations seem to have been to ordinary parish work and to the confessional, he was steered by those who may have known his talents better, from a very early period in his life as a priest, towards an official career, first the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, which is the papal Secretariat of State, under Monsignor Gasparri who was to assist Pius XI in framing the Vatican Treaty.

The paradox persisted: Pacelli combined his official work with pastoral work, just as still during his public audiences he has been known to go into a corner of the audience hall at a peasant's request and hear his confession.

The steady ecclesiastical career drove on: Papal Nuncio in Munich in 1917 so that he could act as intermediary for the Pope in his efforts to attain peace (here he saw violent revolution for the first time when the Communists broke into his palace); in 1920 with the formation of the German Republic he became Nuncio in Berlin and later when Hitler began his campaign for power he maintained close ties with the Centre Party. (The leader of the Centre Party, now Monsignor Kaass, has remained the Pope's friend, is administrator of St. Peter's and is responsible for the excavations under the Vatican which have disclosed the old Roman cemetery where St. Peter was buried. He has built the Pope a private staircase, so that he can make his way alone into these caverns and talk to the workmen. Walking among his tombs Monsignor Kaass referred with affection to his friend, pointing a finger upwards, "him up there.")

In 1929 when Pacelli left Germany the inevitable Cardinalate followed: the parish priest was doomed, you would have said, and yet he obstinately stayed alive. We can hear him speaking in the words of Pacelli's farewell so different from the formal encyclicals that were to follow. "I go the way in which God, by the mouth of the Pontiff, commands me to go. I go this way fully conscious of my weakness, believing in Him who uses the weak to put the strong to shame. What I was, is nothing; what I am is little; but what I shall become is eternal." "What I shall become." As the Pope placed the Red Hat on his head he spoke the traditional words that in our day have taken on real significance: "Accept the red hat, a special sign of the Cardinal's dignity. This means that you should be ready to shed your blood and to die, if need be, in the fearless defence of our Holy Faith, for the preservation of quiet and peace among the Christian people. . . ."

Only a month later he was appointed Secretary of State to Pius XI, perhaps the most politically active Pope since the Middle Ages, the man who revived the Vatican State, who fought Mussolini so firmly that Mussolini rejoiced in public at his death, who began the struggle against Hitler not only by his encyclicals

but by personal affront—he left Rome when Hitler came there and closed the Vatican Museum which Hitler had intended to visit. On his death bed in February 1939 he finished his last encyclical—the final words written on the night he died, his last blow, it was to have been, so they say, at the Totalitarian State. His successor never issued it.

Yet the new Pope as Secretary of State had been closely associated with his predecessor's policy, and his attitude to affairs in Germany was well known. At a party which he gave in Rome after his return from Germany, an old Conservative friend of his, the Marchese Patrizi, was overheard by him to remark that it was a good thing Germany had a strong man now who would deal with the Communists. Cardinal Pacelli turned on him. "For goodness' sake, Joseph," he said, "don't talk such nonsense. The Nazis are infinitely worse." We can assume therefore that neither Hitler nor Mussolini were gratified when the Conclave, breaking a tradition of nearly 300 years, elected the Secretary of State Pope in March 1939 at the age of sixty-three. Perhaps the foreign Cardinals turned the balance in Pacelli's favour. He was almost the only Cardinal they could have met personally.

For this is another paradox of the Pope—that this priest whom I have heard described as a Franciscan by one who knows him well, is regarded as a very travelled, very modern man. There are the new gadgets of the Vatican—from the white typewriter and the white telephone and the electric razor to the short-wave wireless station and the latest television equipment provided by an American company. But the television transmitter is apparently not working very well and the service is starved for money, while the programmes of the Vatican radio are astonishingly uninspired—relays of leaders from the *Osservatore Romano*, local pieces of Catholic news.

As for travel it is true that Pacelli moved about a good deal of the earth's surface before he became Pope, but it is a reasonable guess that the only two countries that made any deep impression on him were Germany and America. For both these countries he has retained great affection. The administrator of St. Peter's is German and only recently Cardinal Faulhaber was invited to consecrate the new altar of the restored basilica of Constantine under St. Peter's. As for America his personal feeling of friendship for Cardinal Spellman seems certain, though somewhat sur-

prising considering the marked divergency of their characters (the cynical sometimes point out that the United States is the only country of importance left that is able to transmit Peter's Pence to Rome: the Catholics of other nations are bound by their currency laws).

As for his other travels they have been widespread, but brief and filled with the official duties of the Pope's representative: to the Eucharistic Congress at Buenos Aires in 1934; to Lourdes in 1935 on the nineteenth centenary of the Redemption; to Lisieux during the Eucharistic Congress in 1937; and to the next Congress in 1938 at Budapest. How much during such journeys does the Pope's representative see? There is a passage in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* that describes the travels of an army. "A soldier on the march is hemmed in and borne along by his regiment as much as a sailor is by his ship. However far he has walked, whatever strange, unknown and dangerous places he reaches, just as a sailor is always surrounded by the same decks, masts and rigging of his ship, so the soldier always has around him the same comrades, the same sergeant-major, the same Company dog, and the same commanders." The Papal Secretary of State moving from country to country, Eucharistic Congress to Eucharistic Congress, is hemmed in by the pack wagons of the church, the dignitaries in skull caps, the distant crowds that hide by their pious mass even the shape of the buildings.

One cannot believe that the journeys of Pacelli have influenced him much except insofar as they have driven him to learn many languages. One must not exaggerate his knowledge however. We hear the gentle precise voice speaking to us in English, and we forget the strict limits of his vocabulary. He sends his blessings to our families "with deep affection"—that is a favourite phrase often repeated and emphasized—but inevitably he has to address the pilgrim in certain set formulas.

For the priest this is a smaller handicap than for the diplomat. A priest in the confessional too is apt to speak in formulas, but into the straight jacket of a limited vocabulary some priests are able to introduce an extraordinary intimacy, gentleness, a sense of love. That is Pius XII's achievement, if we can call the grace of great charity an achievement. We become aware that he loves the world as another man may love his only son. The enemies whom Pius XI pursued with such vigour, he fights with the

weapon of charity. In his presence one feels that here is a priest who is waiting patiently for the moment of martyrdom, and his patience includes even the long drawn conversations of the nuns who visit him. From another room one hears the long stream of aged feminine talk while the Monsignors move restlessly in their purple robes, looking at their watches or making that movement of the hand to the chin forming an imaginary beard, that is the Latin way of exclaiming at a bore. Out comes the last nun, strutting away with the happy contented smile of a woman who has said her say and out from his inner room comes the Pope with his precise vigorous step ready to greet the next unimportant stranger "with deep affection."

How endless these audiences must seem to him—private audiences to diplomats, authors, civil servants, the people "with a pull," public audiences to Italian cyclists, to actors, boy scouts, aircraft engineers, directors of American companies, Fiat workers, bankers, tram conductors. We seem to hear a village priest speaking, rather than the ex-Nuncio to Berlin—the ex-Secretary of State, when he speaks to the tram conductors and describes their own troubles to them. "He has to warn some passengers, to give advice to others, and in selling the tickets he usually has to give the change—a duty which complicates things still more. He must see to it that people enter by the rear door and leave by the front door and that they observe the smoking regulations." How long is it since the Pope travelled in a tram? The description is so simple that we smile. "A duty which complicates things still more." We had not thought of the complication of change-giving, but the conductors had and the Pope.

One is reminded sometimes in these addresses of the controversy between Henry James and the popular Victorian novelist, Walter Besant. Besant had made fun at the notion of a woman writing a novel about men's affairs, and James replied that any girl with sufficient talent could write a novel about the Brigade of Guards after once looking through the window of a Mess. It was a question of talent, not of knowledge. What is true of the writer is true of the priest, who from a hint in the confessional has to build his knowledge of a whole world outside his experience, and one finds in these private addresses of the Pope—what one seldom finds in the encyclicals—an intuitive genius. For example here is this celibate, this hermit buried in the

Vatican cave, addressing a special audience of newly married couples on the heroic energy required in everyday life, the boredoms and frustrations and torn nerves of two people living under one roof. "When one should remember during a chilly dispute that it is better to keep quiet, to keep in check a complaint, or to use a milder word instead of a stronger, because one knows that the stronger word, once it is out, will relieve, it is true, the tension of the irritated nerves, but will also leave its darkening shadow behind."

Many soldiers, Allied and German, Protestants, atheists, Jews, had their audiences with the Pope during the war. The neutrality of the Vatican was rigidly guarded: Rome was protected from the Allies as from the Germans to the best of the Pope's ability, but soldiers of all sides were welcome as pilgrims. Many stories have been told of these wartime audiences. Here is one more.

While a London priest was making his rounds in his parish a year or two ago, a working man shouted to him from across the road that "his — Pope" was the greatest man alive. The priest, who supposed the man was drunk, stopped and spoke to him since the view he had expressed was hardly common in that area. The man told him that he had lost his only son in the war and that they had been very attached to one another. The thought that he would never see his son again was driving him crazy, for he had no religious faith to help him. He was in the army and went to the Vatican with a military party to see the Pope. As the Pope moved amongst them, chatting to this man and that, the father shouted after him. The Pope asked him what he wanted and he said that he wanted to know if there was any hope of his seeing his son again. The Pope replied that that was one of those short questions which required a long answer. He told one of the attendants to bring the man after the audience to his private room. There he sat down and for an hour explained the reasons for believing in the immortality of the soul. The man left the Pope convinced that he would see his son again and happy in the knowledge.

This is the Pope whom most of us before the war regarded as a diplomat. Even his photographs, where the eyes have lost expression behind deep glasses, where the lips keep their thinness and lose their sensitivity, add to the impression of an ex-Secretary of State. It is true he keeps that office still in his own hands,

assisted by Monsignor Montini, but one who has had close dealings with the Pope, denied to me that diplomacy was important in his eyes. This is not a world where diplomatic action counts for much. In the last thirty years the Pope has seen the consistent failure of diplomacy, but it is a world he once knew well—the world of ambassadors and visiting Ministers—and he retains these contacts in his own hands much as a man keeps the trophies on his wall of a sport long abandoned. The world cannot be saved by diplomacy.

What can save it?

So much time for audiences public and private, so much time for work (the light in his study over St. Peter's burns till one in the morning), so much time like any other priest for his breviary, and in the background one is aware of the huge threatening world, the conferences in Moscow, the speeches at Lake Success, the troops pouring down in Korea, big business bulling and bearing in the skyscrapers of Wall Street. He presses into one more visitor's hand a little green envelope with the Papal arms containing a small nickel holy medal. Can this Thing—so defenceless it seems—survive?

Every morning at breakfast the Pope lets loose his two canaries and his favourite bird—a small bird with a green breast, I don't know its name. They walk over the table pecking at his butter, and his favourite takes crumbs from between his fingers and perches on the white shoulder. "He talks to children," my informant said, "as though they were his birds and to his birds, as though they were children. . . ." That was why he called the Pope Franciscan, and the Franciscans next to the Jesuits are his favourite Order. Even in this short period of relaxation he seems to be making a hieratic gesture symbolizing charity. If a man loves enough every act will represent his love.

I have said he gives the impression of a man patiently waiting for martyrdom. He has already barely escaped it. At his coronation, the German ambassador was heard to remark, "Very moving and beautiful, but it will be the last," and a moment came during the war, under the German Occupation, when the end was expected. Hitler was said to have uttered the threat that he would raze the Vatican to the ground, and it is certainly true that the administrator received orders one day from "him up there" to produce a plan for summoning the ambassadors of the powers

at a moment's notice to St. Peter's so that the Pope if necessary might make an announcement of grave importance. But the threat of exile or death passed: the order was revoked. Now again the danger threatens. The Church's borders are widespread, in Poland and Korea, but war travels fast these days. Hitler was handicapped by the presence of the Church in Germany: in Russia the Church is represented only by a few priests in hiding.

Sometimes a Pope can be known by the Saints he canonizes. Pius XI, the pugnacious priest, canonized Thomas More and John Fisher, over-ruling the requirements of miracles: they were men who fought the Totalitarian State of their day. Pacelli has canonized the child Maria Goretti, who died forgiving her murderer.

It is a long time since a Pope has awoken even in those of other faiths, such a sense of closeness. One remembers Henry James's description of Pius IX among his guards coming up the Via Condotti in his great rumbling black-horsed coach "so capacious that the august personage within—a hand of automatic benediction, a large, handsome, pale old face, a pair of celebrated eyes which one took, on trust, for sinister—could show from it as enshrined in the dim depths of a chapel."

Pius XII gives no automatic benediction, though there are still dim depths, one feels, in the Vatican in spite of the Roman sunshine glinting on the orders and the swords as one is sieved from one audience chamber to another by scarlet flunkies, who will later grab the guileless visitor and extort the money for drinks. The huge civil service has to go on functioning, and sometimes in our irritation at its slowness, its caution, or its pedantry, we may feel that it is obscuring the white-clothed figure at the centre. But a feeling like this comes and goes: it is not the impression that remains.

One visitor replying to a polite formal enquiry of the Pope said that there were two Masses he would always remember: one was at 5.30 in the morning at a side altar, in a small Franciscan monastery in Apulia, the Host raised in Padre Pio's hands marked with the black ugly dried patches of the stigmata: the other was the Pope's Jubilee Mass in Rome, the enormous crowd pressed into St. Peter's, and men and women cheering and weeping as the Pope passed up the nave, boys flinging their scout hats into the air: the fine transparent features like those on a coin,

going by, the hand raised in a resolute blessing, the smile of "deep affection," and later the Pope alone at the altar, when the Cardinals who served him had stepped aside, moving with grace and precision through the motions of the Mass, doing what every priest does every day, the servant of the servants of God, and not impossibly, one feels, a saint.

But how much more difficult sanctity must be under the Michelangelo frescoes, among the applauding crowds, through the daily audiences with the bicyclists and the tram conductors, the nuns and the ambassadors, than in the stony fields of Apulia where Pio is confined. It is the strength of the Church in Italy that it can produce such extremes, and exactly the same thought came to one kneeling among a dozen women in the early morning in the Franciscan monastery, and pressed among the cheering crowds in St. Peter's. It was not after all the question—can this Thing survive? it was—how can this Thing ever be defeated?

AN INTERPRETER OF OUR TIME

By

EDWARD SARMIENTO

ORTEGA, who has recently been visiting this country, is a philosopher whose chosen activity so far as his written work is concerned has consisted precisely in the interpretation of our time. A glance at the titles of some of his books will reveal this: *The Spectator*, *Invertebrate Spain*, *The Theme of Our Time*, *The Rebellion of the Masses*. In reality, all his published work can be thought of as a running commentary on the cultural life of Europe of the last fifty years. Partly this is due to his background—he is the son and grandson of journalists, his grandfather founded *El Imparcial*; partly to the milieu—in Ortega's youth, the Spanish reading public would have been inaccessible

to philosophy by means of technical exposition, the heavy tome. (That this is no longer so is to some extent due to Ortega himself.) But these are excuses that are usually made on behalf of Ortega by his admirers. They are in fact unnecessary. The whole point of Ortega's philosophy is that the true nature of reality, the true nature of our knowledge about reality, must lead us to constant revision of our concepts, our values and our activity. Ortega is fundamentally time-conscious and this consciousness of time leads him to believe that every generation starts life afresh, so, for that matter does every individual. Ortega's time is not empty, it is laden with history, but the burden of history weighing on every human life (a different burden according to time and place) does not lie so heavy that the individual spirit can not—must not—see things anew, discover what his new way of seeing things is. So that Ortega's philosophical method has not been the crystallization of an omnivalent principle on which to erect a system. It has been rather the inward adherence to a new point of view (a basic term in Ortega) applied rigorously to the vast variety of events in the life of Europe during the present century. The best expression of this, perhaps, outside his own works, is the great *Revista de Occidente* which he founded in 1923 and kept going till the outbreak of the Spanish civil war in 1936.

This is not to say that there is not, in fact, a system, only that Ortega has not so far expounded it as such. Some ten years or so ago, those who followed Ortega's thought closely were encouraged to hope that he was, at last, going to satisfy his readers by the written exposition of his systematized thought. He promised us, for example, *The Dawn of Historic Reason, Man and People* and *Concerning Living Reason*. There have been other titles promised. So far only a portion of the first-named has appeared (*Ideas y creencias*, 1940) and a course of lectures (so far unpublished) under the title of the second (*El hombre y la gente*) delivered in Madrid in 1949-50. One realized at that time, of course, that "vital reason" was the basic concept of Ortega, one knew that in his lectures from the chair of metaphysics in the University of Madrid, he had given a much more closely argued version of his thought than he elected to give in his writing. However, the gap is still unfilled and it is undoubtedly a loss. It has certainly prejudiced Ortega in some quarters. On the other hand, during the intervening years, a pupil of Ortega's has

appeared who has done something to present the scattered and multifarious books and essays of the master in an ordered system and, more important, has worked to distinguish the thought of Ortega from that of the existentialist movements (with which he is in no way identifiable, despite certain superficial resemblances) and above all, from that of Husserl and Dilthey from whom some of Ortega's opponents persist in deriving him. This pupil is Sr. Julián Marías and in his *Historia de la filosofía* and *Introducción a la filosofía* and several other works has provided us with an interim systematization of orteguian philosophy.

There are two basic elements in Ortega's thought: an immediate sense of reality and the consciousness of history. Ortega forsakes the epistemological preoccupation (though he has plenty to say on the nature of thought: human thought is not essentially the rules of logic, the investigation of mind will not reveal the nature of thought, thought is not an absolute reality but an historical magnitude) and accepts reality as it is experienced. One thinks both of Unamuno and Santayana. All three have the instinctive acceptance of experience that we are apt to dub Hispanic: Unamuno with a bull-like charge, Santayana, sicklied o'er and with a genteel sigh (the sigh perhaps for both reality and the alien gentility). Ortega is not less trained in the idealist tradition than Santayana, but, more subtle than either of his compatriots, he insists on defining the nature of the experience of life in such a way as to evade both the idealist dream and the threatening lower of crude realism: "I am myself and my circumstance (i.e. my experience); the root reality is life." This realization is "vital reason." What will be the fortune of this formula, what its refinements, we have yet to see, but since 1910 this basic definition has been the foundation of all Ortega's interpretation of life. He turns his back on the phenomenological reduction to consciousness in the conviction that no removal of the self is possible, every act of consciousness is a newly-lived experience of life. Equally, Ortega is no existentialist. There is no question of the priority of existence before essence: in abstract reason, the utility of which for man's needs Ortega insists on, essence remains prior to existence; in "vital reason," man is not "up against" reality, he and things taken together are reality, are life. The experience of life is not the conjunction of two abstractions, "man" and "life," but the finding of himself by man in a situation which is

the result of past situations. The very definition of reality by Ortega takes him straight into history.

Ortega is typical of the twentieth century in this direct, decisive approach to the fundamental problem, and in approaching it within the human horizon, and he is, of course, the acute theorist of the whole historical approach of modern times in his *Historia como sistema*.¹ Ortega criticizes our time for the violence and ruthlessness of its overthrow of the excessive intellectualism of the past and, ranging himself decidedly, with zest and calm, on the side of those who are not weighed down by the inheritance of the past, but accept it, proposes a judicious and reasonable modification (not overthrow) of intellectualism. Indeed, Ortega as a critic of the times is decidedly intellectualist in character. His perception of the new feeling of our time for a greater completeness in human ideals is the perception of a man who is most himself in judgment, not in feeling or instinct. The pattern of good character for the future is fuller, not exclusive; its instrument is "vital," not abstract, reason; this instrument in play is "historic reason."

One may single out what can be called nodal points in Ortega's web of ideas strung across from the "vital reason" of the individual man to the "historic reason" of the whole of life as lived. The "point of view" has been mentioned already, every perceptive sees a new aspect of life, there can be no absolutely right view, the whole is seen only by God. "Authenticity" is a quality much dwelt on: loyalty to one's own point of view is the condition of seeing anything at all. It is a duty to be ceaselessly and fully oneself. The fruition of life is to understand it: intellection is not however exclusively and abstractly rational; in a sense man is what he knows. Three other points stand out as nerve-centres in Ortega: love, art and religion. Ortega is an anti-Stendhalian in the theory of love. The value of love is its enhancement of the intensity of life, its genesis is choice and its norm the intimate and secret preferences of our deepest character. A projection, if you like, but not, like Stendhal's, necessarily erroneous, but, on the contrary, necessarily (except for the possibility of fortuitous mistakes such as occur in other realms of action) correct. Ortega was one of the first to perceive the nature of "modern art"

¹ First published in English in the Cassirer *festschrift: Philosophy and History*, O.U.P., 1935.

(typically approached through its social effects) and to realize that the impossible task of creating aesthetic values out of next to nothing was likely to give place to a modified ambition that readmitted a greater element of realism. Ortega is not, or at least has not for many years past been a religious believer and appears to be wanting to some degree in religious sensibility (though some passages in his Madrid lectures last year reveal him as surprisingly and unexpectedly sensitive to some traditional Spanish expressions of religious feeling), but he is profoundly religious in a non-pietistic way: he has a deep consciousness of the transcendent, a conviction of freedom, a psychological use of the idea of God (if nothing else); in his attitude to the Church he is not anti-clerical, and would welcome the intellectual participation of Catholics and of the Church in his plans for the renovation of the cultural life of his own country or of any State on pragmatic grounds (if on no others); surprisingly to those who misunderstand him, he defends the theologian as against the mystic. There is much in all this that is comparable to Jung; Ortega's outlook is profoundly psychological in quality and, as might be expected from his insistence on our awareness of reality and the need for accepting it, his thought is characterized by an "unconscious" tendency to subjectivism.

Ortega's interpretation of the modern world, tacit and explicit, as communicated by these nodal points makes of the tendencies to voluntarism and direct action and gratuitous assertion in morals, politics, art and thought, a reaction against excessive intellectualization, but, as a reaction, inevitably wrapped up in and part of that very excess. His point of view sees an approach—if all is not lost—of a revival of hierarchy, restoration of dignity to the soul, to philosophy itself, of a completer individual life because more conscious and more strenuous, a restoration of stability and the possibility of a revival of religious values. To these points we must now add two vital criticisms of the modern world that Ortega has to make, by which, in fact, he is best known: that involved in his concept of the mass-man and his acute sense of the peril of modern civilization. With these are involved Ortega's critical and judicious attitude to modern political forms and the modes which the concept of democracy takes in his thought. Ortega sees the dangers inherent in the modern tendency to place all men on one level (in every order of

life) and to ignore differences of value and of contribution to society. This he calls the formation of the mass-man, and the peril to civilization is that complete control by the mass-man would destroy the very sources of his own well-being, the knowledge and culture of the better-endowed. Ortega's two most famous books, *La rebelión de las masas* and *El tema de nuestro tiempo* develop, first, the theme of the mass-man and the (involuntary) menace he constitutes (there is a curious reminiscence in this of the seventeenth-century moralist Gracián), and, second, the thorny path that the formation of a reformed intellectualism ("vital reason") must tread; the two are intimately connected. As an interpretation of what our time is likely to bring forth, both may be summed up as *the emergence of the individual dedicated to life and not to a truncated function*.

At this point we may turn to a quality of Ortega hitherto neglected, his extraordinary high accomplishment as a stylist. Ortega is a poet. A distinguished contemporary Spanish poet, Pedro Salinas, has pointed out the lyrical quality of modern literature as a whole, and Ortega has in fact made the same observation of modern science; so did Unamuno of philosophy. This lyricism of which we are all so conscious in every part of modern culture carries with it a tendency to subjectivism which though counter to the most developed parts of Ortega's philosophy, is yet very strong in his own psychology. There is a certain tendency to conflict here observable in Ortega which is perhaps the explanation of a certain disappointment one feels in his philosophy, particularly strong perhaps in one of his most important books, *History as a System*. It is this more than anything that makes us wish for the books which so far we have only been promised.

In *History as a System*, Ortega, as elsewhere, seems to offer to the mind a sane and therefore incomplete, a sound and therefore humble system of thought or, rather, of thinking. Here, he maintains that the realization that the past is present in every new circumstance will deliver us from the inability of science to handle the reality its concepts represent by offering for our inspection not a concept but the fact, charged with all its past:

Hence the expression "historical reason" must be understood in all the rigour of the term: not an extra-historical reason which appears to be fulfilled in history but, literally, *a substantive reason*

constituted by what has happened to man, the revelation of a reality transcending man's theories. . . .

We can understand in physics the analytical operations it performs in reducing complex facts to a repertory of simpler facts. But these elemental basic facts of physics are unintelligible. Impact conveys exactly nothing to intellection. And this is inevitable since it is a fact. Historical reason, on the contrary, accepts nothing as a mere fact: it makes every fact fluid in the *fieri* whence it comes, it *sees* how the fact takes place.¹ . . .

But there Ortega stops. What we want to know is the man who makes—or rather unmakes—these facts. A thoroughgoing account of man as Ortega sees him is what we want. Doubtless he can be put together from the vast mass of Ortega's *Obras completas*; we are given hints, this one for instance:

I here leave untouched the fundamental question—so fundamental that it is prior to the whole subject of this study and flows beyond it—as to whether the individual life itself is not already transcendence. I have always been reluctant to believe that my life is nothing but a “fact of consciousness.” I incline rather to believe the contrary, that my “consciousness” is in my life, is a fact of my life.²

Ortega has more to tell us, but from what he has already said, there is no doubt that it will be important for us to listen and supremely relevant to the problems of our time.

¹ The translation is from the volume *History and Philosophy* referred to above and is by Professor Atkinson.

² From the Essay on Hegel's “Philosophy of History” in the volume *Goethe desde dentro*.

AN UNWILLING APOSTATE

The Case of Anthony Tyrrell

By

CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

THERE WAS SOMETHING about Anthony Tyrrell that kept leading him to the brink of high tragedy, and then plunging him instead into farce. Even his extremely distinguished lineage could not escape a faint note of ridicule. His uncanny facility for catching the eye of important persons, with unfortunate consequences, might almost have been hereditary. The progenitor of the family was that Sir Walter who is gratefully remembered by children as having shot William Rufus in mistake for a stag. Another ancestor, Sir James, was chosen by Richard Crouchback (or was it by Henry Tudor?) to suffocate the Princes in the Tower. It is at least true that the Tyrrells had a strong tradition of personal loyalty to the Crown. Sir Henry, fourteenth knight in descent from Sir Walter, compromised with the Elizabethan Settlement and hoped for better days. But his brother George was one of that company of sad gentlemen—very different from the fierce Geneva exiles—who took their consciences into obscurity abroad and left their hearts behind. By 1573 he was so poor that he had to travel on foot, carrying his luggage. It was a doleful youth-time for Anthony, his eldest son, who had left elmy England with his father at the age of eight.

In 1573 Anthony, being now twenty-one, came back secretly to England, with half a crown in his pocket, to solicit alms from his numerous relatives. Some prettily-phrased begging letters and a sheet of verses were found on him when he was arrested. If each relative, he argued, would give him a little, he would soon accumulate the ten pounds necessary for completing his studies. He had accumulated some old clothes and a promise of four

pounds when he came to grief with his aunt, Lady Petre of Ingatestone. One of the letters described in doggerel:

. . . the entertainment we had at Ingerstone, the which because it was not very good beshrew Mrs. Jones—We came in I think a saturnical hour, for the old drab began upon us so to lower—that although she were my aunt Rebecca's maid, her look would have made the devil himself afraid. . . .

An ex-minister, bearing the memorable name of Davy Jones—perhaps the husband of Aunt Rebecca's maid—had been released from the stocks in order to supply Walsingham with intimate details about the Tyrrells and neighbouring families. He had gone through a form of conversion to the Catholic Faith, and this enabled him to sponge on his victims as well as to extract a pittance for his information from Mr. Mills, Walsingham's secretary. This creature was probably the instrument of Anthony's apprehension.

The verses which were found on him when he was arrested are worth transcribing; though trivial, they sound more seaworthy than the average pre-Spenserian construction:

Like as the merchant, which on surging seas
In beaten bark hath felt the grievous rage
Of Aeolus' blasts, till Neptune for his ease
By princely powers their choler did assuage:

Even so my muse

Doth seem by Fortune's cruel spite
To feel her cup so mixed with bitter gall
As no conceit could make her to delight,
Until she chanced in scholarship to fall

With you, my friend,

Whom mighty Jove hath sent me for relief
When heavy cares would seek for to appease
My pensive mind, and slyly as a thief
Hold me captivéd still in sore distress.

Unwittingly prophetic, the poor scholar was held captivéd still in sore distress for two years. There was little persecution-to-death at this time. It is true that a simple and saintly priest, Father Wodehouse (pronounced "Wuddus"), had been very brutally executed in the previous year. But that was partly because he got Lord Burghley on the raw. He insisted first on addressing him as

"William Cecil"; then began patiently to explain the catechism to him as to a child; finally when Burghley, exchanging wrath for guile, or mockery, offered him a post as his chaplain, he accepted eagerly and asked at what hour Burghley would be ready to be confessed and receive absolution.

Burghley's notorious snobbery, which helped Father Wuddus to heaven, helped Anthony into the wide world again. There was intercession by relatives, and a humbled but very noble letter from old George Tyrrell. Burghley liked to offset Walsingham's brusquerie with the old nobility; and to have a scion of sheer Norman stock, gracefully suppliant on the carpet before him, was soothing balm. Anthony by all inferences was a charmer, and it is likely that he made various promises he had no very firm intention of keeping. He was released in 1576—perhaps only just in the nick of time. For in that year came the first alarums of invading "Seminaries." Allen's overseas foundations of Rheims and Rome were issuing their challenge, and the great battle for the soul of England, which was to engage most of Burghley's attention for the rest of the century, had begun.

To Rome Anthony betook himself. By 1581—in too short a time—he was ordained priest. He crossed over to England, for the second time, in the wake of Campion's great band of martyrs. He was caught again, and now, for certain, he stood on the threshold of martyrdom. But with the aid of a resourceful companion he broke prison in 1582 and, sheltered by illustrious Catholics, escaped abroad again. He was thirty now, talented, popular, and priested, with the halo of near-martyrdom. He applied for admission to the Society of Jesus, but was not accepted. His companion of the prison exploit, an older and worldlier man—his name was Ballard—now introduced him to quite a different set of Catholic exiles: the Paget-Morgan crowd, who hob-nobbed with French *politiques*, disparaged Dr. Allen, and thought the Jesuits a menace to society. To this time probably belong the following reflections, penned later, on an old and well-known theme:

But among all other things one of the principal causes of my spoiling was in not keeping my heart pure and clean as at the beginning it was; and long had the enemy practised with me to desire to be conversant much with women, and this under the colour of holiness and piety; who of themselves although they were very

good and vertuous, yet did my soul often catch deformity before that ever I departed their company.¹

Tyrrell could write. But a life of excitement and intrigue now opened up before him. Ballard appeared one day early in 1585 resplendently disguised as Captain Fortescue, a military man. He was going to England on a mission of momentous importance. Tyrrell, lightheartedly daring as usual, set sail with him. Actually, the mission was a confidence trick along the usual lines; a rising of Catholic gentry in England was to be kindled by assurances of a French (alternatively of a Spanish) invasion; then a Spanish (alternatively a French) invasion was to be stimulated by reports of an imminent *coup d'état* in England. It was not long before Tyrrell began to see through the older man's magniloquence and to laugh secretly at him; all the same, it was fun to swagger about in fine clothes and to enjoy, even in a backstairs way, his birthright as a courtier:

I began to be in expenses, not considering that I lived upon the alms of other men. Then fell I to haunt taverns and ordinaries far unfit for my profession, to spend with the best, to ride up and down upon pleasure only, and to slack the spiritual harvest. Alms given to me only to bestow I would oftentimes hold and reserve some part to myself, under the colour of necessity, whereby the spirit of covetousness got hold of me, and then I was sore assailed with pride, covetousness, gluttony and lechery. What shall I say more?

Living handsomely upon alms, they toured the country houses of England, with a personal attendant called Mr. Maude. This gentleman sent back conscientious reports on their itinerary to Sir Francis Walsingham. The country squires, one is glad to note, received them with increasing coldness. But Ballard made a great hit, at first, among the young gentlemen of the Inns of Court and of the Queen's Bodyguard:

Fortescue had his attendants as thick as might be, every gentleman calling him Captain, insomuch that in every tavern and inn in London he was called Captain Fortescue, and every man thought that knew him not, that he with a great band should have gone over with my Lord of Leicester.

¹ Tyrrell's manuscript, edited by Robert Persons, was first published, together with the autobiography of William Weston, by Morris, *The Troubles of Our Catholic Forefathers*, ii (London, 1875). In this book Fr. Morris cites other sources for a life of Anthony Tyrrell. But further information, not available to him, is contained in Boyd, *Calendar of Scottish Papers*, viii (for the Babington Plot) and in the *Hatfield Calendar*, iv (for the episode of 1593).

Ballard, though a bombastic mischief-making dupe, was at least an honest partisan. But behind him Tyrrell had glimpses of a much more unsavoury type of political ecclesiastic. Of this type were the two Giffords: Dr. William, a sinister fool, and his cousin Gilbert, a baby-faced devil; it was through them that the idea of assassinating Queen Elizabeth became part of the "Babington Plot"; and yet they were at the same time negotiating with Walsingham for the overthrow of the Jesuits and Seminary Priests who obeyed Dr. Allen. This two-facedness was, with them, the art of the professional "intelligencer." But, in the case of Tyrrell, it simply aggravated his natural ambivalence; while he was consciously carrying out his spiritual duties as a priest, he was subconsciously brooding on how these might be turned to his temporal advantage as a politician, if he were captured—and capture was getting nearer and nearer.

Although the "Babington Plot" did not break open till August 1586, long lists of suspects (most of them innocent) were being drawn up by Walsingham's spies, months beforehand. As early as June there were preliminary arrests of individuals from whom incriminating evidence, true or false, might be extracted. Anthony Babington himself—whose character rather resembled Anthony Tyrrell's except that it was haughtier and less resilient—opened negotiations with Walsingham on June 29th.

But by this time—by April, in fact—Tyrrell had parted from Ballard, revived his fervour, and thrown himself into the apostolate, in company with Father Weston, the only Jesuit then in England, and a band of Seminary Priests. By a very unfortunate coincidence the apostolate was undergoing a phase which made it almost as dangerous as politics to one of Anthony's temperament. In the first half of 1586 there was a positive mania for *exorcising* hysterical persons thought to be demoniacs. These 'exorcisms,' carried out according to some quite unauthorized French ritual, were, though humanely intended, extremely grotesque and even brutal. From a modern point of view it is incredible that good and intelligent men—and so these priests were—could have indulged in them. But in fact they were simply a less cruel form of the contemporary Protestant mania for witch-hunting. With the capture of Weston and the others, the exorcisms ceased altogether; and the new Jesuit superior Garnet, who landed with Southwell in July, was certainly not the man to renew them.

But in May and June they were at their height, and Tyrrell threw himself into them with abandon. He wrote a treatise on the subject, *The Book of Miracles*, which was later to enter anonymously into Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Tyrrell's association with the exorcists brought a new range of suspects into Walsingham's ken. They were closely watched, and, on July 4th, for the third time in his life, Tyrrell was apprehended.

He entered his prison cell full of buoyed-up fervour. But the two days and nights of suspense and neglect that followed caused a change of outlook. On July 6th he wrote to his old patron Lord Burghley (who had promised to be a second father to him) offering information: "of that of which your honour shall be full fain."

This change is not quite such a hopeless collapse as it seems. Among the small section of the clergy that was hostile to Cardinal Allen the custom had already begun which was to continue for the next hundred years, of bargaining with the Government along the lines of toleration for Catholics in exchange for the extermination of the Jesuits. The age was so honeycombed with double-crossing that, historically, it would not be surprising to find that Anthony had been an "intelligencer" ever since his first interview with Burghley ten years earlier. Psychologically, in his case, it is not possible; but it is highly probable that in 1586 he had begun to fancy himself as one of those private detectives at large who were anxious to help the Government in accordance with some particular *nostrum* for Church and State. But to be a private detective it was essential *to be at large*. Anthony was in bonds; and he was soon made to feel that unconditional surrender was the only opening to Lord Burghley's favour. His breaking-point came in August when he was allowed to see the racked and crippled form of Ballard being carried in a chair for fresh examination. He made a formal recantation on the Genevan Bible, before Justice Young, and set himself to write whatever was required of him.

What was required of him was to answer leading questions and add corroborative detail. His accusations fell under three heads. Those against Babington's companions were of little value except in the case of a young Guardsman, Charles Tilney; Tyrrell's cowardly slanders may have tipped the scale against him. Those against the Pope and the Jesuits as authors of the murder-plot

were in such contradiction with the main evidence that no use was made of them. But those against the Catholics who had sheltered and befriended him proved terribly effective and led to many executions, imprisonments, and ruinations.

In September Tyrrell was given a large measure of liberty to spy on his fellow prisoners in the Clink, and to hear their confessions; various devices were used to make it seem that he was still a firm confessor for the Faith. While he plied this dreadful trade, Charles Tilney mounted the scaffold and said to the haranguing minister: "Preacher, I have come to die, not to argue," and three priests who had been his admired fellow-workers in June, went bravely and gently, on his evidence, to the traitor's death. He was striving desperately and savagely for some recognition that would restore his self-esteem. The omens seemed propitious. Davison, the Queen's Secretary, though very busy this October, found time to write to Burghley:

The letter from Tyrrell was very agreeable to her Majesty, both for the style and affection of the man which she greatly commendeth.

But October wore on without remuneration. Burghley and Young cast their nets wider, and turned the screw tighter. In the faces of his fellow-Catholics Tyrrell began to see the first signs of a dreadful misgiving. His reflections at this time could have supplied matter for *Faustus* and *Macbeth* more pertinent than his anonymous contribution to *King Lear*:

I thought my sins too abominable and grievous, and albeit I believed that God could forgive them, yet I assured myself that he never would do it, for I found in myself no hope or desire of amendment. My sleeps were troublesome, my dreams fearful at my going to bed. I thought it bootied not to pray, and yet without prayer I thought the devil would have too much power over me. The Sign of the Cross and other customs of the Catholic Church I had laid aside, and yet at times fear forced me to use them. Truly, I do not lie. I would sometimes, when my candle was put out, imagine my chamber to be full of devils, especially of those I had tormented in my former exorcisms. I imagined how they environed me round about, triumphing of their possession of me, and watching when they should carry my soul as their perpetual prey into eternal damnation.

Yet in his day-light consciousness he still grasped at those dreams which in his days of piety had been subconscious temptations:

And yet if I had been asked that time what was the sum of all my felicity that I had proposed unto myself, forsooth I could answer no other, but only to come into favour with her Majesty, to be well thought of such as are of best account about her, to gain myself some temporal living, to get me a woman to be my concubine (for wife by reason of my priesthood she could be none), to break the vow of my holy orders, to live in all kinds of sensuality.

By Christmas time he knew for certain that he was not cut out to be a machiavel; the worm of conscience would never let him be. Blindly, faltering, starting at every shadow, he began to grope towards the light. He began to go to confession to a blind priest—but always with the half-resolution that if he were suspected he would say it was a mock-confession to entrap the priest. Still, the grace of the sacrament works if it is not positively rejected. He began to unburden himself secretly in the long series of retractions from which most of the passages quoted here are taken. The torment of this dual role became evident to his fellow-Catholics in prison. They raided his private room, and found torn copies of Burghley's letters to him with notes of his answers on the back. He was arraigned before an informal court of prisoners one night in the Marshalsea: a grim and distressing scene. This external push settled him. He was finally reconciled about the middle of February. With his reconciliation he recovered his nerve.

Correspondence between Walsingham and Phelippes, written with controlled exasperation, gives details of his escape and directions for his recapture; it was known that he had composed "fifty sheets" which might present Lord Burghley in a most unfavourable light. In March 1587 he had been given five pounds by Justice Young, with a commission to do spy work in Norfolk. Meanwhile, with incredible generosity, his fellow-Catholics had subscribed fifty pounds for his escape. With pursuivants hard on his heels, he reached Yorkshire, worked his way across the Scottish border, and, in May, caught a fly-boat from Leith to the German shore. From there his precious "fifty sheets" were dispatched to Father Persons in Rome. Shortly after that, he returned quietly to England and gave himself up!

Persons, who edited but did not publish his papers, does not, like a later editor, ascribe his return to another fit of back-sliding; he simply says that Tyrrell could not face a life of long and ignominious repentance. From what follows it seems clear that,

with a sort of mad economy, he had decided on the only antidote that would both kill the poison of his treachery and cure his mortally-wounded self-esteem. "Your dissembling," Burghley had written in one of his letters, "is to a good end, and therefore both tolerable and commendable."¹

Very well! he would carry his enemy's instructions one step further, and then, with one grand, heroic, sacrificial gesture, he would blow them to the moon.

Burghley seems to have betrayed no particular surprise at his return; this suggests a refinement of double-crossing too intricate to be worth unravelling. It was arranged that Tyrrell should preach a sermon of public repentance for his temporary lapse; and he was given full facilities to compose it. With inspired energy he wrote another one, at the same time, very different in tone, and made copy after copy of it. The day chosen for the ceremony was January 31, 1588; the place, Paul's Cross.

A great concourse awaited him. He was preceded by a famous preacher, John Reynolds, who bade the multitude give attentive hearing to the edifying words that were to follow. Then Anthony Tyrrell, taking a firm grip on himself and on the papers within his doublet, mounted the pulpit. He looked down on the packed crowds. This was as near to Tyburn as he would ever get—and surely it was near enough. He lifted up his head and lived his finest hour:

The cause of my coming here this day is to protest before God and His Angels and you that are present that I am a most horrible, heinous, and detestable sinner thus to behave myself, and unworthy of all mercy and grace both before God and man; and that the true cause of my coming up to this pulpit is to confirm my first confession, made by the instinct of God's holy grace and written with mine own hand, of the most impudent lies and wicked slanders that I uttered to the Right Honourable my Lord Treasurer and others against many innocent persons—

Of course he was interrupted almost immediately. But before he could be torn down, he had flung his copies broadcast among the crowd, where there were Catholics waiting to pick them up.

¹ Burghley's letters are Tyrrell's transcribed versions of them; but they can generally be checked, both in substance and in phraseology, by his answers to them which are among the State Papers.

The scene that followed has been described by Persons with his swift and stabbing pen:

But in the main space all was in marvellous hurly and burly at Paul's Cross, where the people had heard three sermons in one hour, all contrary the one to the other; the first of the preacher in praise and credit of Tyrrell; the second of Tyrrell himself in derogation of the preacher; the third of Justice Young threatening death to those that should believe Tyrrell. But the concourse of people was so unruly as Tyrrell was carried away on men's shoulders to the gaol of Newgate, by St Nicholas' shambles in Newgate market, the Protestants crying out vengeance upon him, and he weeping bitterly and knocking his breast and affirming that he had done nothing that day but upon mere force and compulsion of his conscience—

and Persons concludes ominously:

And the concourse was so great about the prison as they were forced to change him within two hours after to the Counter, where none came to him but Topcliffe and Young.

The mention of Topcliffe suggests physical torture. We do not know. We only know that he held out resolutely for three months, and then fell desperately ill. While he lay prostrate, the Spanish Armada came and went. Its failure may have had something to do with his own. He recovered his health, but his nerve had gone. On December 8th—the feast of the Conception—he read an uneventful recantation of all his former Catholic pronouncements.

Now that all the fight was knocked out of him, his captors treated him with great generosity. He was given two vicarages and a wife in his native county of Essex. Thus did the rosy fancies of his illicit dreamland become tangible fact—"to gain myself some temporal living, to get me a woman to be my concubine (for wife by reason of my priesthood she could be none)." Here, between Dengy and Southminster, he lived for the next five years; and here he might have ended his days, like a minor Herrick, writing verses, preaching occasionally on Sundays, and having mild affairs with village lasses. But the worm, the gnawing worm, would not let him be. Neither would his relatives overseas. He had a sister, a nun in the Bridgettine convent at Rouen, and some message seems to have been smuggled across which decided him to make one more bid for his salvation.

In the autumn of 1593, armed with all his realizable wealth in

the form of sixty-four gold pounds, he arrived in London. His travel-agent was a certain Lieutenant Ferris who contracted to get people across from Southampton to Dieppe as part of the Earl of Essex's army. But Ferris's wife kept a brothel in Fenchurch Street; and that, as far as Tyrrell was concerned, proved the be-all and end-all of the affair. Once he got as far as Croydon, and another time to Staines, presumably on his way to the coast; but on both occasions he gravitated back to Mrs. Ferris in Fenchurch Street. His money dwindled to thirty-six pounds. In September, Ferris's organization was rounded up by the London magistrates; and, once again, after five years, Tyrrell found himself face to face with his old acquaintance, Justice Young. It was a far cry from the days when he slipped to and fro across the channel with such easy daring.

He was in no shape for heroics now; he tried to pass the whole thing off as a disreputable escapade, and gave full details of his misfortunes in the brothel. Young, who was more actively interested in Ferris, seems to have regarded Tyrrell with feelings as near to amusement as an assumption of puritanism would permit. Indeed, from his point of view, there *was* something grimly humorous about the utter degradation of Tyrrell's excuses. While Southwell hung silent against a wall till the blood came out of his mouth, these "auricular confessions" of his fellow-priest were a compensating contrast.

But Sir Robert Cecil, who had stepped into Walsingham's place, took a more serious view. The year 1593 was one of acute rivalry between his spy organization and that of Essex. It was also a critical year for poets; Christopher Marlowe was stabbed in 1593, Henry Constable was converted, and John Donne apostatized. Constable, with whom Tyrrell was acquainted, was one of Essex's numerous intelligencers; and Tyrrell's answers concerning him provide a useful pointer to the dating of his life. Cecil was anxious not to miss anything. By the end of November Tyrrell was still languishing in the Marshalsea in a penniless condition. Young took a paternal interest in him, and advised Cecil that he was now thoroughly penitent and might be sent home to his wife. An abject letter from Tyrrell in December confirmed this. He was sent back to his wife, or rather to his concubine—"for wife by reason of my priesthood she could be none." High tragedy had finished in low farce in a manner reminiscent of

Measure for Measure. Having dared death a second time, like Claudio at the bidding of his sister, Tyrrell had ended up in the role of Lucio: "Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death, whipping, and hanging."

But Shakespeare's only known acquaintance with Anthony Tyrrell was *incognito* and at second hand. It sprang from his last public appearance, in 1601, and it came about in this way. Samuel Harsnet, chaplain to the Bishop of London, had got himself into serious trouble for licensing Hayward's book on Richard the Second, and had only saved himself by crawling as abjectly as ever Tyrrell did. To recover favour he was engaged, at the bidding of his bishop, in fomenting discord among the hard-pressed Catholic minority. The line chosen, to discredit the Jesuits, was to rake up the sixteen-year-old episode of the exorcisms. The result was the book known as *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures, etc.* Tyrrell, with his *Book of Miracles*, was a principal witness; but he gave his evidence with disappointing sobriety and reluctance. The star witness was a half-witted prison drab who was prevailed on to utter the usual dreary slanders against the chastity of some of the most heroic martyrs. In this form, spiced with salacity and inflated with pious bombast, the book became a best-seller in 1603; and its loud-mouthed, yellow-bellied author went on to be Archbishop of York. Today it is only remembered because Shakespeare read it and put bits of it into the mouth of Edgar—Edgar, the typical recusant—in the enigmatic way that marks his awareness of the religious conflict.

After that, Tyrrell's moth-like figure relapsed once more into the obscurity of the age whose highlights he could hit with such unerring truancy. But if he had less constancy than some, he had more than most. At least he fought with Mammon before he became its slave and echo. And there is good reason to believe that at the very end, like a wise clown, he cheated his hard master. Weston, in his memoirs written in 1615, adds that he has just heard that Tyrrell in his old age slipped across into Belgium and died at peace with the Church. This is confirmed by a list of apostate priests, preserved in the Old Chapter, which carries against the name of Anthony Tyrrell the note: *mortuus est poenitens*.

St. Ambrose, on the adultery of David, says that Kings are accustomed to sin, but not accustomed to repent. It is not really

surprising that one of Tyrrell's temperament, caught between the heroic discipline of the Counter-Reformation and the vile Cecilian Police-State, should have been mangled with such sickening results. But what is surprising is that at the end of it all, he should have crawled alive out of the mangle and reached salvation.

THE LADY AND THE ISSUE

By

WALTER J. ONG

AS PSYCHOLOGISTS now know only too well, issues concerned with authority and submission move in the labyrinths of human consciousness through passages which are often cunning and corridors which are often secretly contrived. The chorus of protest which has followed on the definition of the Assumption provides a case in point—perhaps the finest laboratory case that could be desired from the point of view of theological speculation.

In the protest, there is a curious tension observable between the preoccupation with authority on the one side and with the matter defined on the other, so that the continued insistence that the latter is "non-essential" becomes a phenomenon of considerable importance. Here we have the strange tendency to associate in the act of protest two apparently irrelevant things so often associated in separatist movements: resentment of authority and a desire to write Our Lady off the record. In the present case, this latter manifests itself in the assertion that the actual content of the definition is, after all, quite a negligible matter—an assertion both so insistent and so calculatingly off-hand as to hint that it conceals issues too urgent psychologically to be brought out into the open. And so, bring them out we must.

The revolt against the Church in the sixteenth century was not the simple revolt against authority that it is often made out to be. Psychologically and in every other way, the symbol of authority is the father-image. But the father-image and all the apparatus that goes with it was not only kept by the separatists but inflated by them in a way it could not be within the Catholic economy. The Calvinist's God carried authority to the extreme of sheer whim, and Jonathan Edwards was in the main current of two centuries of separatism when he terrified the citizens of Massachusetts with his sermon on the praiseworthy horrors of divine authority as he conceived it, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Indeed, the father-image is one of the most viable points of the separatist tradition. Attenuated and vestigial, it remains in the feeling about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man which is one of the last snippets of dogma to persist in the most advanced stages of Protestantism.

Devotion to a stern, unflinching authoritarianism, become an attribute not of a group but of individuals, split the separatist movement into countless sects. The real, deeply felt, but little understood difficulties of separatists were and are not with such authoritarianism, but with the mitigated, mediated authority, the symbol of which must be feminine, the initial experience of which each human being ordinarily knows in his relations with his mother. The Church which the separatist berated he saw, significantly, not as a cruel father but as an outcast mother. In anti-Catholic propaganda, even the Pope became only the Scarlet Woman of the Apocalypse—a title hardly the staple in denunciations of dictators.

The question to which the separatist returned the answer No was not, Is there a stern Master over us all? Rather, it was, In my dealings with this Master is there something involved which asserts itself not by authority so much as by inescapable continuity, which does not dart forth bright words of command but simply dwells with me, something which I do not pretend particularly to understand, which is so immediate that I hardly think of trying to understand it, but which is definitely and ineluctably a datum of my consciousness, which is unmistakably *there*? The matter concerns not a father, who appears at unpredictable intervals, to be sure, but, after all, only occasionally, who is assertive from time to time, but also in a relatively abstract

way. The matter concerns a mother, to whom I first awoke, who was there all the time. The father's commands are intelligible, his dealings tend more to be in words, and I know him by them. They are sharp, distinct, and clear. Not so the presence of this other being. She may indeed give an occasional command, but radically she is known to me as the one who is there alongside me, who binds together all my fragments of days and years in the simple continuity of her material presence.

The mother does not operate in terms of authority, which she is inclined to disavow as her own and refer to the father, for her first experience of this child was as he grew in her womb, and she had little enough authority over him there. She continues her work as she began it then—darkly, mysteriously, and with her own being in complete subjection. She must assert authority, yes, but in a curiously obverse way. When she threatens, it is to say that, if necessary, ultimately a father will punish. She is a permanent occasion of humiliation and shame to those she commands, for her dealings, being based always on derived sanctions, not her own but the father's, keep always at the focus of attention the matter of subordination and subjection. Her very commands are in terms of her subjection to the father, whose sanction must rule all, so that it becomes matter for taunts to have to do what *mother* says.

Both by this subjection and by her way of bringing children into the world, which is not by commanding them nor by explaining them, but by bearing them, she is the symbol of submission and of death. She is, of course, the dark lady of the romantic poets and the mother-goddess of the mystery cults. Her role as representative of the dark, material principle of things determines her action with regard to authority: she flowers and discovers herself when completely and totally subject to it, and she gives it continuity and existence in time and space. Without a mother to transmit his authority into the real world of the child's life, the father is a sorry performer, a practical nonentity, and his authority is matter more for humour than for anything else.

This economy in which the female component is a vital factor is the economy against which the separatist mentality rebels. In its attitude toward this economy, the separatist reveals one of the deep, basic drives of his being which gives separatism—from

Brownism and Anabaptism and Evangelicism through High Anglicanism—its characteristic twist. Depending on how thoroughly separatist it is, separatism from the sixteenth century to the present stands for a Christianity which, in various degrees, is in a fundamental sense unsexed.

Almost every characteristic tenet of separatist bodies can be charted in terms of the impulse to insulate religion from the femininely polarized aspects of reality. To catch sight of this fact, one must forget the contorting perspectives conjured up by the past few centuries out of the stale smoke of the courtly love tradition, and reconsider the view which makes woman, as against man, a kind of abstraction, the antithesis of all that is earthy, a dweller in a realm of "ideals." This view is ultimately untenable. Woman's relation to ideals is in function of the male's mind. Dante, not Beatrice, wrote the poem. Beatrice may have occasioned the vision, but he *had* it. From the poetic and from the "idealistic" point of view, Dante was inspired, while Beatrice, in a sense, only moped. Save for Dante's mind and sensibility, we should long ago have forgot to credit her even with the moping.

Dante's symbolism and his apotheosis of Beatrice has indeed a certain indubitable validity, but this is not by any means straightforward, and it must not be allowed to obscure the still unimpeachable vision of the old earth-cults and of the Scriptures themselves, which see in woman the very opposite of abstraction, the symbol of body rather than of mind, human nature (all of us, that is, and not woman alone) in its material polarity, the passively oriented, the conserver, the saver of odds and ends, the custodian of material possessions (modern advertisers prefer to say the world's great buyer)—adaptable, like matter itself, so that the stock charge against her is frivolity and fickleness, but adaptable in her own sweet way, so that in function of her very pliancy itself, she becomes the great resister to change in any environment in which she subsists. Many a man has set out to rule a woman and succeeded, but he has neither made her into what he thought he would, nor come out himself unaltered.

The dread of bringing this feminine, passive polarization of reality into the terms which fix one's relationship with God has been an obsession of separatists. The obsession is radically unaffected even by the violence of revivalist preaching and "getting

religion," although these phenomena owe their existence and erratic manifestations of self-surrender impulses to the torque which the obsession establishes. One is tempted to say that this dread is more than one of the obsessions: it is *the* obsession which has constituted separatism, seen simply from a particular point of view. The impulse which inspires attacks on Mary, however it may disguise itself here as a defence of God's honour against that of a mere creature, as it sets darkly to work elsewhere reveals its secret springs of action.

Perhaps the most explicit manifestation of the impulse is the fact that with the rise of modern separatism, the concept of the Church as Mother is immediately liquidated. "Holy Mother Church" is heard of only in some few of the least separatist of separatist bodies. She is replaced by such notions as that of the invisible, purely spiritual union of the Elect, whoever they may be, disengaged from any material commitment, or that of the "congregation" based on a contractual union of wills by covenant—a more abstract and masculine sort of business, and something moreover that could perhaps pull its own weight in a court of law.

Ceremony and images are more openly sabotaged. "The coverlet of her bed was made by her own hands, the clothes of lawn and purple that she wears"¹—but there is to be no lawn or purple in God's service any more; as William Fulke and other anti-surplice agitators insisted; nor any of the abundance of material objects which the author of Proverbs works into his encomium of the virtuous woman. This is trumpery—or symbolism, which, to the mind confronting us here, is the same thing. The sense of mystery, which shows its psychological implications by its regular association with female priestesses and sibyls in pagan cults, must of course go, too, as the ground is cleared for a tidy Unitarianism and the claims of the fully plausible universe.

The separatist's automatic set against the sacraments is of a piece with his set against the feminine polarization in the world of material reality, and his attack on the sacraments instinctively works itself up to its most furious frenzy in hostility to the Real Presence, where the involvement of God with designable material reality reaches a kind of *ne plus ultra*. To this mind, burning candles are particularly loathsome, for, whether or not he can say

¹ Prov. xxxi, 22.

why, he bridles at the symbolism with its high feminine charge of submission and consuming death. Beneath the flame, he sees shadowed forth the same reality which makes the Catholic to-day feel that votive lights can never be adequately replaced by electric lamps, which do not burn themselves bit by bit away. And the notion of sacrificial action, where a material gift—and, what is worse, most often a gift somehow consumed—is in *rapprochement* with spiritual reality, is particularly abhorrent to him.

And yet, perhaps in many ways more significant than any of these reactions of his—certainly more real in its psychological effects to-day—is the secularization which the separatist from the very beginning instinctively seeks to impose on matrimony. It is a sociological and psychological and physiological commonplace that marriage is, in a very real way, a more crucial issue for woman than for man. Attitudes toward it affect women more than they do men. Marriage is bi-sexual, but the relationship of the sexes to it differs. In the Scriptural way of speaking, Eve was made for Adam, not Adam for Eve. Adam was indeed not self-sufficient. He needed a helpmate. But his dependence on her is not of the same order as hers on him. If the sexual situation is posited given the existence of the human male, the female is created to fit the situation. Thus, in a bi-sexual world, woman is destined to be the symbol of sex in a way man himself cannot be. The medieval diatribes against woman are outcries, valid for man and for woman, against the tyranny which sex can exercise. It is no accident that, although the cinema audience is more female than male, sexiness in cinema advertisements—and indeed nearly everywhere—turns on the display of the female body.

An attitude toward marriage, the sacrament of sex, thus tends to be a correlative of an attitude toward woman, and the compulsion that the separatist, from Luther on, has always felt to keep marriage from being too religious, to deny that it is a sacrament at all, is of a piece with his compulsion to insulate his dealings with God from association with the femininely polarized aspects of reality. Religion must be unsexed, and marriage must go. When she returns to religion, woman must now come alone, unescorted, pretending that she is a man and doing the things men do—and one has the female evangelists and ministers who are a persistent, if sporadic, phenomenon in separatist groups. Within the past few years, they have started up immediately in

the State-engineered schismatic churches behind the Iron Curtain, and got their pictures in the papers.

Against the total background of what it is to be a human being, one's sex is in a way a minor incident, and an incident subject even to chemical control. But psycho-physically, and metaphysically, it is an incident which, if it repays study, remains always inexhaustible in its implications. Like the law, sex is a bottomless pit with ramifications everywhere. Thus, in their tendency to deny specifically religious relevance to marriage, the separatists have of course denied the religious relevance of virginity. The wife's giving herself to her husband being no sacrament, neither is there any virtue in man's or woman's refraining from all that has to do with this kind of surrender—saving up everything connected with the self-surrender impulse—to give oneself in a genuinely analogous, but more sublime way to God. The analogy has no force. The *Canticle of Canticles* is robbed of meaning, and so is the espousal of the soul to God which dominates the whole corpus of non-scriptural mystical literature. Professor Kenneth Murdock's recent study of the New England Puritan's devotional poetry has made the point that only one writer, Edward Taylor, the least separatist and nearest to Catholic—and, incidentally, by common acclaim far and away the most competent poet—features the traditional espousal motif in his works at all.

The term "Puritan," which establishes itself as the proper name for an arch-separatism, is mortally accurate, if unwittingly so, in its sexual overtones. The "purity" which the Roundhead proposed for religious service meant removing from this service all that bespeaks feminine polarity. Woman and sex being surrogates for one another, the religious economy of the Puritan thus entailed a curious kind of sexual restraint—rightly styled an inhibition for being not the restraint of a frank chastity but the tortured mobilization of heavily disguised drives.

But beyond and beneath all the other manifestations, the most unequivocal sign of the ill-balanced sexual doctrine of separatist movements remains the fierce and obsessive dog-in-the-manger attitude toward Mary. The fierceness is suspect because it is all out of proportion to its announced objective, which is hardly even aimed at when it comes to the case of a Christ degraded to the rank of mere man. There is no scandal taken when those who

no longer think Christ is God go right ahead naming whole churches after Him—the Church of Christ Scientist, and so on. But a recent polemic finds something horribly sinister in the Catholic practice of dedicating individual church buildings here and there to Our Lady. Mary has obviously become a symbol, as it is indeed natural she should, and her symbolic valence is a matter not of her person nor of her mere creatureliness, but of her sex. As is the case in relations with woman, the reaction of her enemies to her is something they feel much more intensely than they understand.

The separatist mentality has not grown up in the world unattended by other related attitudes toward sex. Blood-brother to this mentality is the repression of the knowledge that there is tragedy involved in every woman's existence by the simple fact that she is a woman. This repression, a kind of unforeseen sequel to the warped medieval cult of courtly love, has tyrannized for several centuries more and more over men's minds, particularly in "liberal" circles, where insistence on the motif of complete independence as a rule of life is constantly embarrassed by the scandal of subjection within the race itself. The glossing over of woman's tragedy accounts for much of the unsettling effect on the contemporary mentality produced by Freudian insights, which once more at least frankly face the implications of the relationship between the sexes. The same glossing over is tied up with the obsessional hostility toward Mary and the inability, often enough experienced even by devout Catholics, to catch the implications of her role in the economy of the Redemption.

Perhaps this repression has seen its hey-day. D. H. Lawrence seems to have felt it his mission in life to attack the lies abroad regarding the relations of the sexes, and, from a quite different quarter, a novelist such as Mr. C. S. Lewis has used the theorem of the subjection of the female as a kind of leit-motif. It is certain that the temper of the "liberal" mentality would profit by a renewed acknowledgment of the tragedy of woman's lot, and quite as certain that the temper of Catholic devotion to Our Lady would only gain by the same acknowledgment.

Woman's tragedy is due ultimately to the fact that her body is ordered to others in a way that man's is not. For each of us, our mother's body was at one time at our command, and the whole routine of her living was ordered not to herself, but to us. Woman,

corporeally speaking, which is to say as woman, for spiritually she is the equal of man, is not so self-possessed as she might be (if she were man). She is built to be an offering to others, to feed them, to be consumed in their use. Her most spiritual aspirations are dominated by this orientation within her. She cannot ordinarily build a kingdom around herself as a man can—she must build it around others. She can be happy only when involved in a certain amount of self-destruction. This is not a god-like quality. It is a humbling and all but indecent protestation of finiteness. Yet a woman is compelled to it by all the physiological, psychological, and sociological drives in her life. As a result, this is a man's world.

The role of woman as mother involves all this, and it involves all this for the radical reason that to be a mother means ultimately that woman must furnish out of herself the material for another's body. Woman is deeply committed to the lowliness of matter. The sentimentality and "mommism" which is endemic, we are assured, in America to-day (but sure by that very fact to be epidemic in the world to-morrow) and which is only another aspect of the silent conspiracy to suppress the tragedy of woman's lot, has so warped the meaning of mother that the simple statement that this is what it means to be a mother comes almost as a scandal. Yet Catholics who forget that motherhood is radically a traffic in matter can realize only dimly the pitch and meaning of Our Lady's elevation in grace, the full implications of the *Magnificat—et exaltavit humiles*. To speak plainly, Mary is endowed with the graces which make her the chiefest of mere creatures because her body was made use of by the infant Christ's.

This is only to say that she was given the graces she was given because she is the Mother of Christ, the Mother of God. An angel can generate his thoughts, father them, produce them as a father. He cannot mother them. Thoughts are not that sort of thing. There is paternity in the Godhead—more perfect than human paternity, which functions, however slightly, in terms of matter, and thus has in it an admixture of maternity—but in the Godhead there is no corresponding maternity. Nothing higher than a human being can be a mother. Nothing higher than a woman can be. Motherhood, woman's greatest glory, is something that does not exist elsewhere except lower on the animal scale. Yet it is because of this that Mary is what she is. It is because of this that

she was made full of grace. Because of the tragedy of woman's lot.

It is because precisely so lowly a creature is proposed as the greatest person in all creation, exalted above all the angels, exalted, be it known, above every created male person (God is jealous of masculinity and reserves its exaltation to the case of His Own Son, where it lodges safe from pride, assumed to the Divinity)—it is because of this that Mary remains for eternity the stumbling-block to over-weening male pride, whether this be that of the man who refuses to have woman preferred to him or of the woman who refuses to have anyone preferred to her but a man. Mary says nothing, but merely for being what she is, she sets up a state of crisis. In this state of crisis, one tiny prayer to Mary signalizes a whole psychological revolution and the opening of the soul to grace. It is a warrant of, not perfect, but essential humility. For God will have neither man nor woman on any other terms than complete submission. Authority is not evil, but good. Yet no one is rewarded for exercising it. Only for submitting to God's directives in its exercise.

In that she is woman and exalted for her womanly function as mother, the exaltation of Mary is a kind of apotheosis of tragedy and of the will to die. It is, in a very real sense, the exaltation of the material, passive principle in human existence—Newman, whose flashes of discernment here are most rewarding, has observed that heresies which attack Mary are likely to end by asserting that matter is evil, or, what is the same thing, by explaining it away. And it is in function of her engagement with matter that the Assumption of Our Lady reveals itself for the critical thing it really is.

The Resurrection of Christ, St. Paul insists, is the keystone of Christian belief. Yet, in a way, the Assumption of Mary focuses the issue raised by the Resurrection more sharply than even the Resurrection itself. It is a quite impossible feat of historical exegesis, but one often attempted, to explain away the Resurrection of Christ as simply a way of speaking indulged in by his pious followers. The spirituality of Christ's message, His obvious desire to sublimate the material as far as possible in the spiritual, while it does not lend any substance to this exegesis, can be used to make the exegesis somewhat plausible. The Church's insistence on the historical verity of the Resurrection of Christ can thus fail

to impinge very really on the consciousness of those outside the Church because they can lose it and forget it in the great wealth of purely spiritual items in His teaching. But Mary's womanly function as the symbol of the material world will not allow her Assumption to be thus dismissed in a genial misinterpretation. Mary's whole *raison d'être* is the Body of Christ—she did not give Him His soul or His graces or His spiritual message. What is more, her role is underwritten here not by abstract dogma but by the archetypal symbolism in which psychiatrists deal and which involves the human consciousness in the toils of real existence so deeply that by no flights of abstraction can the toils be spun away.

Mary does not submit to abstraction. She cannot be quite liquidated in the mazy flow of thought. She cannot be distilled into a purely spiritual message. Mary indeed stood for much spiritually. But, rather differently from her Son, who was the Word of God and spoke accordingly, she functions hardly at all in terms of what she says. In a strange way, her spirituality is keyed to her material role, her divine motherhood. To focus a theological issue on Mary is inevitably to engage oneself inextricably with matter and its sanctification. To say that her body is no longer on earth is to fix the issue once for all. Like all human beings, her Son had a body, it is true. But His role here is not hers and cannot be. Mary, in a peculiar way, not only has a body, but *is* body—being woman, the symbol of body, important as the mother, whose claim to glory lodges in her having been prepared to give a body to her Son.

Thus the doctrine of the Assumption, far from being anything "new" or "non-essential," has the very desirable effect of precipitating Catholic doctrine quite really in the face of the persistent tendency to distill it away into vaporous nothingness. Now it is less possible than ever to pretend that the Catholic position means less than it means in fact, or to pretend that a sufficiently elaborate theory or a proper economy of explanation would make the Catholic position much less a commitment than it is. The commitment here, like any commitment, is made not in terms of theory but in reality. In the case of the doctrine of the Assumption, the commitment and the crisis is fixed within reality in terms of the concrete material of Mary's body. The Assumption does not engender theory so much as create a situa-

tion, like that created by the question, This God you speak of, do you mean that, like human persons, like you or me, He is really *there*? (the implication being, of course, not by spatial but by personal presence).

The proclamation of the Assumption has been cited outside the Church as an obstacle to the unity of Christendom. The nervousness here perhaps betrays the kind of unity being dreamt of: a unity with no commitments at all. There is another kind of unity which dominates Catholic thinking: the unity of the Mystical Body, a unity not set afloat on a raft of words but grounded in the material here and now, where, after all, the material and the spiritual meet—Jesus Christ yesterday and to-day and the same forever, grasped in the designable actuality of those making up His Church. Generally speaking, attention to the Mystical Body and attention to Mary are functions of one another, although here again Mary underlines the bodily component more urgently than her Son does.

Perhaps one can go farther still. The Mystical Body has been lately a favourite topic not only of Catholic theologians but of many outside the Catholic Church, who even hope to implement out of this topic their theories of a loosely connected Christendom. Would it be accurate to suggest that the nervousness concerning devotion to Mary which haunts even such minds seriously interested in the Mystical Body betrays a torque in the application of the Mystical Body doctrine itself? The nervousness is there. It is a strange psychological fact that, when he has agreed with the Church on all points of doctrine, even on all points regarding Mary, there persists for the non-Catholic a curious uneasiness regarding his personal relationship and that of others to Mary, a psychological block which may even keep him from praying to her as his Mother and which at least warns him to tread somewhat warily here. The state of affairs is quite different from what obtains within the Catholic Church where complete lack of inhibition regarding adulation of Mary is one of the characteristic attitudes which Catholics who have hardly a glimmering of abstract theology bear about in the deepest depths of their being.

Unsteadiness regarding Mary is a psychological symptom of an imbalance regarding the Mystical Body which is radically a tendency to slur over the material component, the Body, and

to concentrate too much on the "mystical." Neither component should be sacrificed. Christ's Church is both mystical and Body, with that which Body bespeaks, possible wounds and sufferings, but always a continuity which is not only spiritual but somehow materially assignable as well.

By virtue of the archetypal symbolism in which her whole being involves her and which brings St. Thomas to maintain that it was thoroughly in keeping with the nature of reality that Christ should have a human mother but no human father, Mary is inextricably involved in the notion of the Mystical Body and thereby in the structure of the Church itself. Attitudes toward her become attitudes toward the Church and toward all reality. The point can be made in two theorems which can perhaps now be advanced. First, anti-Marianism tends to generate separatism and separatism anti-Marianism. Indeed, in many cases the two are no more than surrogates for one another. Secondly, the Mystical Body of Christ is to be found only where there is no nervousness, no uncertainty regarding matter and material continuity, not as an abstract bit of theory, but as both detached from and set within the complex of all other issues by means of the symbol which is woman. This last theorem can be elaborated in another and perhaps more telling formula: The Mystical Body of Christ is to be found only where such a concept as that of Holy Mother Church exists as a natural frame of thought and as a real determinant of mentality. Groups and individuals which cannot use with confidence and genuine relevance this concept of Holy Mother Church, whatever they may call themselves, are in fact separatist movements. Dogma develops, but it never repudiates itself. Assured possession of this age-old concept of Holy Mother Church is a *sine qua non* of contemporary orthodoxy. Those who cannot manage the concept with assurance are somehow off balance regarding that continuity and unity and that sanctification of the material component of things which the doctrine of the Assumption makes patent as nothing else quite would to-day.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

SINCE writing my last gramophone notes I have had the opportunity of hearing some of the Decca long-playing records. I find them superior to the ordinary records, even at this early stage of their development; they are very light to handle, and are made of a bendable unbreakable material that reduces surface scratch to a minimum. The actual tone-reproduction is first-rate. For the "modernist" desiring to test this new development in recording I would like to recommend Villa-Lobos's "Choros No. 10" (CCL7504) for chorus and orchestra, an exciting but perhaps overlong piece of primitive unsophisticated music based on Brazilian folk-music (on the reverse side is an enchantingly descriptive toccata for orchestra, "Little Train of Caipira," and an aria "On a Song of our Country" by the same composer)¹: two concertos by Ravel, one for the left hand and one for both hands, conducted by Ansermet and beautifully played by Jacqueline Blancard and Nicole Henriot (LXT2565), and Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra (LXT2529) conducted by van Beinum. For the classically minded are beautiful recordings of Bach's Cantata No. 11—"Praise our God"—with William Herbert (tenor), William Parsons (bass) and Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) and the Cantata Singers under Dr. Jacques (LX3006), and Palestrina's "Missa Papae Marcelli" sung by a choir unknown to me, the Roger Wagner Chorale (CTL7010).

From the musician's point of view the most important record issue recently is the set labelled "Early English Keyboard Music" (Decca X541-52). I hope that the series will be continued, for it is comparable and could in many respects be analogous to the volumes of *Musica Britannica* now being published by Messrs. Stainer and Bell as a Festival Year contribution to music. The set contains harpsichord, virginal and organ music by Bull, Philips, Johnson, Tomkins, Farnaby, Byrd, Gibbons, Weelkes and Martin Peerson, authoritatively played by Thurstan Dart, Elizabeth Goble and Geraint Jones (organ). The stature of some of these composers is revealed to be far larger than musical history-books allow: and the rapt wonder and controlled ecstasy of John Bull's "In Nomine" for organ, the strength and poignancy of Thomas Tomkins's big A minor Pavan, and the beauty of Peter Philips's "Pavana Dolorosa" and "Galliarda Dolorosa" should make us realise that our prime contribution to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century music was by no means an exclusively choral one.

Other English music recently put on records is William Walton's

¹ For those interested in exploring further works by this prolific and uneven composer I would recommend the recordings of some of the piano pieces played with superb assurance by Ellen Ballon (Decca X512-14 and M670-1, not long-playing).

Violin Concerto (H.M.V. DB9611-13), phenomenally played, under the composer, by Heifetz and the Philharmonia Orchestra. This is music full of the composer's nervous energy, interspersed by passages of brooding nostalgia. But the predominance of pyrotechnics makes one long for what after all the violin can do best, namely, extended periods of *cantabile* warmth. The devil of ingenuity is always at the composer's elbow, prompting him to complications of texture and virtuoso display, so that there is hardly a moment of simple and telling tranquillity. Delius's "North Country Sketches" (Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Beecham: Col. LX8804-6) and "A Song of Summer" (Hallé Orchestra under Barbirolli: H.M.V. DB9609-10) have also appeared. The former work contains some of Delius's most evocative music and should be better known. The playing in both works is exquisitely sensitive. The remaining English works are Richard Arnell's extravert ballet music, "Punch and the Child," recorded by Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Col. LX8794-6), vividly scored, personal, evocative, and revealing a decided flair for the writing of ballet music; and John Ireland's symphonic rhapsody "Mai-dun" (Hallé Orchestra under Barbirolli: H.M.V. DB9651-2) in which the composer imaginatively discourses upon not very distinguished subject-matter. The recording of this work is somewhat unsatisfactory: there is an obtrusive "edge" to the sounds.

French music is represented by Ravel's Trio in A minor, played by a trio of "Stars," Heifetz, Piatigorsky and Rubinstein (H.M.V. DB9620-2), Berlioz' "Overture to King Lear" (Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Beecham: H.M.V. DB0614-15), César Franck's (if Franck can be called French) Organ Fantasia in C played by Dupré (Decca AX443-4), and Debussy's "Images" (two sets) for piano played by Gieseeking (Col. LX1395-7) and the orchestral "Nuages," No. 1 of the "Nocturnes" (Philharmonia Orchestra under Galliera: Col. DX1754). When will recording companies realize that a fortuitous assemblage of eminent soloists does not necessarily lead to fine chamber-music playing? The Ravel trio is a case in point: each player is superb in his own domain (although not a single real *pianissimo* reveals itself), yet the overall effect is musically disunified. Berlioz' "Lear" Overture is not one of his best works: in fact, much of it is rather dull. At its best Berlioz' music leaves little musical "shape" in the mind of the listener, but here I find little more than a rambling texture. Franck's Organ Fantasia is a very dull work with few recognizable lineaments, but it is beautifully played. In another world are the Debussy pieces. The "Images" are played with superb artistry: the tone is ravishing and the execution flawless. Moreover, Gieseeking does not "interpret" the music as Cortot does in the recordings of Debussy's Preludes: consequently his response to the notes Debussy wrote is imaginatively exact.

Before I turn to the classics I would like specially to recommend a concerto for guitar and orchestra by Castelnuovo-Tedesco played by Segovia and the New London Orchestra under Alec Sherman (Col. LX8806-8). The work itself is, in its fairly light way, most attractive, but the playing of the solo part is so exquisite, so full of thrilling nuance of tone as well as of virtuosity, as to make the work appear perhaps better than it is. Sibelius and Prokofiev are also well served by their interpreters in new recordings of the former's First Symphony (H.M.V. DB9616-19) and the latter's Third Piano Sonata (H.M.V. C3941). Stokowski and "His Symphony Orchestra" (what a curious description!) give a vital performance of a powerful if somewhat unrepresentative work, and Colin Horsley brings to the Russian work—a more amiable one than the gnarled later sonatas—nimble fingers and good musicianship.

These virtues are, in a higher degree, present in Dinu Lipatti's playing of two Scarlatti sonatas, in D and E (Col. LB1113). The recent death of this young pianist—and composer—is a grievous loss to music. Bach's Cello Suite No. 1 in G is played by Mainardi (Decca AX434-6): the soloist's poor tone and faulty intonation makes him a lamentable choice for the interpretation of such "uncovered" music as is contained in these unaccompanied suites. Nor are Menuhin and Kentner ideal partners in Bach's A major Violin Sonata (H.M.V. DB9638-9), their plodding rhythm damming up all the flow of the music, particularly when every trill and ornament is interpreted as a dynamic accent. The second Brandenburg Concerto is played by the Danish State Broadcasting Orchestra under Wöldike on H.M.V. C7848-9. The performance is alive, but the trumpet-playing is apt to be prickly. Some beautiful singing is extracted by Dr. Jacques from his Cantata Singers in two motets for double choir, "Come Jesu Come" and "The Spirit also Helpeth Us" (Decca AX445-7), although the sopranos are apt to be shaky occasionally as if the *tessitura* is just out of comfortable reach. A long cello concerto by one of the sons of Bach, C. P. E., appears on Col. LX8819-21, played by André Navarra and conducted by Cluytens. The work is not supremely interesting, but the solo-playing is first-rate. This is a cellist of whom we know far too little. Ansermet's conducting of Haydn's "Clock" Symphony (Decca AX403-5) is vital, but there is too much "edge" to the string and wind tone, while Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major (Col. LX8815-18), played by Robert Casadesus with the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York under Münch is spoilt by bad focusing. The piano is far too evident, a fault emphasized by heavy and percussive playing. Backhaus gives unrelenting, but technically clear, performances of two Beethoven sonatas, No. 12 in A flat, Op. 26, and the "Waldstein," on Decca AX428-32, and Kirsten Flagstad, with Herbert Downes (viola) and

Gerald Moore (piano) gives a most heart-easing performance of Brahms's "Geistliches Wiegenlied" on H.M.V. DA1933.

The operatic world is served by two splendid performances. Toscanini conducts Wagner's Parsifal Prelude and Good Friday Music on H.M.V. DB9635-7, and extracts from the N.B.C. Symphony Orchestra a thrilling tissue of sound and controlled crescendos rare in one's experience. Igor Markevitch, a conductor with verve, precision and drive, gives an excellent performance of the overture to Verdi's "Luisa Miller" (H.M.V. C4097). Another overture is Mendelssohn's "Ruy Blas," Op. 95, conducted by Susskind (H.M.V. C4095) in a business-like and musicianly way.

As an Appendix to these Notes I would like thoroughly to recommend a new book invaluable to the record collector, *The Gramophone Record Guide*, by Edward Sackville-West and Desmond Shawe-Taylor.¹ This is unique, not only for the thoroughness with which the compilers survey the vast subject, but for the critical comments, filled with acumen, understanding and fairness, on individual composers and works. But apart from purely musical matters, the book is a mine of subsidiary information.

EDMUND RUBBRA

REVIEWS

ABC OF THE THEATRE

The Oxford Companion to the Theatre, edited by Phyllis Hartnoll (Oxford University Press 35s).

THIS volume comprises a collection of names, dates, places, ages, numbers of performances and other miscellaneous facts relating to all aspects of the theatre: in effect, the vital statistics of the stage from the earliest times to the present day. The emphasis from first to last is on the theatre as an action performed, a *drama*, not merely on the text of the play or on the spectacle. Accordingly, actors and theatres, music-hall and vaudeville, receive as much or even more attention than playwrights, and only occasionally is a play analysed or its plot outlined. The bulk of the book is given over to the English-speaking theatre, space being evenly divided between this country and the United States, while each of the European countries is allotted an article which varies in length with the importance of its national drama.

Of our ideal companions, especially those learned ones resident at Oxford, we may ask that they should be entertaining, reliable and of

¹ Collins 30s.

wise judgment. To what extent does the newcomer fulfil these qualifications? The answer will emerge from a consideration, first of the scattered anecdotes, then of the short entries and finally of the longer articles.

One of the delights of encyclopaedic works is the curious information to be gleaned from them. As a source of entertainment this volume provides nothing exotic or fantastic, none of the florid luxuriance to be found in obscure historical or geographical tomes, and yet it contains much curious and entertaining fact, especially in the brief biographies which leave enough unsaid to excite wonder and imagination. Thus, we learn that "Lycopodium Flask" was the name given to a blow-pipe of vegetable brimstone which added a white flame to the terrors of red fire in the conflagrations of melodrama. On another page we read that "Chirgwin, George H., a Nigger Minstrel, was originally known as the White-Eyed Musical Moke, but from 1877 was billed as 'the White-Eyed Kaffir' because of the white lozenge-shaped patch round his right eye." What a spectacle that short entry conjures up! Going back yet further in history, we learn that William Henry West Betty was a child prodigy who appeared in 1804-05 at the age of thirteen in all the great tragic roles of Shakespeare. The House of Commons was adjourned to see him in *Hamlet* at Drury Lane, and for a brief period he enjoyed a *succès fou*. However, opinion soon turned against him, he was hissed off the stage, and he passed the rest of his life in complete obscurity. He was only one of many great actors, especially comedians, who ended their lives in tragic circumstances.

The short factual entries which give the book its importance as a work of reference are concise and to the point, value-judgments mercifully being avoided wherever possible. That such names as Gide and Montherlant are not included clearly results from the editor's avowed policy of concentrating not on the literary drama but on the theatre as entertainment. Dates are given wherever necessary: one inaccuracy is the date of Lenormand's death, which is given as 1938 instead of 1951. The scope of the book will be sufficiently indicated by quoting the names from a page chosen at random. They include the Phoenix Theatre, London; Phrynicus, (1) the Greek tragic poet, (2) the Athenian comic poet; Picard, one of the few successful dramatists of France under Napoleon; the Piccadilly Theatre, London; Piccolomini, the early Italian dramatist, and Pickard, Helena, who is the wife of Sir Cedric Hardwicke. The editor has cast her finely meshed net both wide and deep.

Short entries such as these provide accurate information, but it is by the longer articles that the encyclopaedia must be judged as a work of scholarship. These cover the history of the theatre in each country from ancient Greece to modern America, structural and technical

aspects of the theatre and stage-production. As an example it may seem appropriate to consider the article on Jesuit drama. The essay is written by Professor Edna Purdie and fills seven and a half pages, each page of this volume being printed in double columns.

Professor Purdie emphasizes the fact that the aim of the Jesuit drama was educational, as regards both the pupils who acted the plays and the audiences that watched. It was differentiated from other scholastic drama by the degree of emphasis laid on the visual side. While the plays were intended primarily to be acted in schools, performances, often as many as five of a single play, were frequently given at court, and in this way the influence of the special Jesuit technique was exerted beyond purely ecclesiastical circles. Typical subjects were the martyrdom of St. Catherine, and the lives of Saul, Herod, Samson and other Biblical figures. The rule that no female characters were to be portrayed was soon relaxed. Similarly, although the plays were at first given in Latin, by the eighteenth century Latin had given way in most cases to the vernacular.

The chief characteristic of the Jesuit drama was the formidable technical skill exercised in the production. Highly complicated lighting effects, development of the means for scene-shifting, the introduction of ballet in the *entr'actes*, and the general luxuriance of decoration—by means of these devices the drama was raised to a highly artistic spectacle. Professor Painter sums up the influence of the Jesuit drama in these words:

The desire to present abstract conceptions in visually attractive and therefore easily acceptable form was a powerful factor in the development of technical methods of production. And in this aspect of the art of the theatre the Jesuit drama was pre-eminent, its only contemporary rival being the opera. . . . At the least, the plays at the Jesuit colleges may be said to have constituted in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries a link between opera and drama, and to have furthered technical advances in the production of both.

This well-informed article is typical of the many historical essays in the *Oxford Companion*, of which the best is perhaps that on Italy to the eighteenth century by Miss K. M. Lea—a model of concise and extremely witty exposition.

These historical articles, covering the whole range of the theatre, with their accumulated learning, diligently assembled and expounded, naturally stimulate the reader to form his own judgments and to draw his own conclusions. A work ordered alphabetically challenges the mind to another and more dangerous kind of ordering, that which dares to assert influences, to label golden ages and dark periods, to speak of trends, echoes and overtones, to divide and to sub-divide, and

most dangerous of all, to moralize about the present state of the theatre. In a review of a book which sets out to say nearly all the important things that can be said about the theatre of the past, a few comments on the present state of the theatre will hardly be out of place.

It has been said that the present age is one of increasing specialization in all fields of activity, including the arts. It has been argued that just as an educated man is no longer able to understand the work done by astronomers, physicists and chemists, so he cannot be expected to understand the fine points of modern music and painting; artists can communicate only with other artists. This argument, however, ignores the fact that it is precisely the function of the arts, at all costs, to communicate with an audience, and even with the world at large; to the extent to which they are inarticulate or esoteric in imparting visionary experience, they fail. It would be nearer the truth to say that the dilemma of the modern artist lies in the diminishing number of accepted *beliefs* common to him and to his audience—beliefs in terms of which he can communicate. As the world-picture blurs, as the very nature of man is called in question, as the spiritual life is increasingly stifled by the material, and especially by the hybrid mass-media which pretend to be arts but which are not; so the problems of the modern artist increase. But this decline in the number of accepted beliefs has little or no connection with specialization in techniques: the difficulty is not one of means but of ends, and is for that reason all the more grave.

This dilemma troubles the serious dramatist more than any other artist. Since the essence of drama, and especially of the highest form of drama, tragedy, is a morally significant struggle, the dramatist can work only within the framework of an absolute moral code held by author and audience alike. He may accept that code unhesitatingly, as, for instance, Aeschylus did, or, like Euripides, he may call it in question, but the essential point is that his society should possess a highly developed moral consciousness. The story is told of an Oriental visiting England who was taken to a performance of *Othello*. After the play it transpired from conversation that he had been greatly moved by the play, but had taken Iago, with his smooth cunning, to be the hero of the tragedy. This story symbolizes the dilemma of the modern dramatist.

Although it cannot be said that wherever society has held moral issues to be of paramount importance, there has been a flourishing theatre, it is nevertheless true that this remains an indispensable condition of great drama. The four great ages of the theatre, fifth-century Athens, Elizabethan England, and Spain and France in the seventeenth century, each in its own way bears witness to this truth.

The religious and ritual origins of the theatre, whether in Greece, the Orient or Christian Europe give historical support to this view that drama must be firmly based on certain moral presuppositions. Moreover, because the theatre of its very nature is dependent on an audience who in some sense participate, the theatre can never represent the views of a minority. The play must always be, before everything, a popular spectacle. The Romantic poets, who had an intensely personal vision at variance with that held by English society in general, wrote play after play, but none of them was successfully performed. Londoners trooped to farces, burlesques, operettas and pantomimes. The important reason is not that the authors, from Shelley to Tennyson, lacked the dramatic sense (though this may have been true, incidentally), but that no audience of the times could share the Romantic poets' moral and aesthetic vision.

It is clear that at the present time neither of the conditions necessary for a healthy theatre are satisfied—the mass of the people no longer consider moral issues of fundamental and overriding importance, nor do they share with the artist those significant beliefs in terms of which drama must be created. The result is to be seen in the degraded and impoverished state of the English theatre to-day. And having led us to this conclusion, the *Oxford Companion* promptly makes amends by inviting us to read of the glories of the past or to browse among the curious and sensational incidents which have always been an essential part of the life of the theatre.

VINCENT CRONIN

ELIZABETHAN JOURNAL

John Gerard: The Autobiography of an Elizabethan, translated from the Latin by Philip Caraman, with an introduction by Graham Greene (Longmans 18s).

SEVEN months after the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot a proclamation was issued banishing all Jesuits and Catholic priests, and declaring that any priest who should reveal himself at the port of exit might depart the realm unmolested. Two men were, however, by name excepted; one of them was John Gerard, who thus received official tribute to the success of his eighteen years' mission in England; he had already escaped. Three years later at the order of his Superiors he wrote an account of his years in England.

Fr. Gerard had a vivid and accurate memory for facts, people and conversations, a keen eye for detail, and a clear style. The autobiography, originally written in Latin, has long been known to Catholic historians; in this new translation it is for the first time made

available for the general reader, and it will surely take its place among those books which are essential to the student for a first-hand knowledge of the period. It has a wider contemporary interest: English Catholics in the reigns of Elizabeth and James passed through the same persecutions as Catholics to-day are enduring in Communist countries—and for the same reasons.

Fr. Gerard, with three other priests, landed in Norfolk from a small boat one wet night in November 1588. Next morning they separated. Gerard was in a strange county and knew no one, and in every town and village the searchers were waiting for the unrecognised passenger. But he was a man of ready wit, and fortunately he had a good knowledge of hawking so that he was able to pass as a falconer who was searching for a lost hawk. At length he made contact with a Catholic stranger and found his way to London where he reported to his Superior, Fr. Garnet.

Thereafter for more than five years he continued his mission with heartening success; but in 1594 he was taken through the deliberate treachery of a trusted servant; and such is his charity that there is no clue to the man's identity in the narrative. But treachery will out, and the deposition of John Frank in the Public Record Office reveals the name of the traitor. Gerard's first prison was the Clink where he endured great discomfort for three months. Thence he was removed to the Counter. Conditions were now much easier, for the Catholics in the place enjoyed such liberty that each had a key to his own room, and of an early morning Gerard was able to say Mass. He reconciled many during these months, and he had so many visitors that sometimes there were six or eight waiting their turn to consult him. He stayed in the Counter until April 1597 when he was removed to the Tower; the Council had learned that he was receiving letters from abroad and they hoped to make him talk. Twice on successive days he was put to the torture of the manacles which he describes minutely; it was six months before he could again use his fingers. The first steps were being taken to bring him to the formality of a trial when he conceived a plan of escape and with the help of brave friends and a stout rope he was rescued. That story is as exciting as any in fiction.

After a short period for recovery Gerard resumed his mission, reconciling the fallen away, making converts, and giving instruction in meditation to the faithful. He had many narrow escapes from capture. Five times at least he hid in a "Priest's hole" while the pursuivants were looking for him; and once he had to wait for four days without food before the search was abandoned. Gerard remained in England until 1606, but so many of his friends were involved in the Gunpowder Plot that for the time it was hopeless to continue the mission. He therefore escaped in disguise in the train of the Spanish ambassador.

Apart from Gerard himself, the Jesuit Fathers Garnet, Southwell, and Oldcorn are the heroes of the book, but many others less known have an honourable place, especially John Lillie who helped Gerard to escape from the Tower and later again saved him by posing as a priest. Among Gerard's more remarkable clients was Penelope Devereux—Sidney's Stella, Essex's sister, Rich's wife and Mountjoy's mistress. After three hours' talk she had fixed a date for her general confession, but Mountjoy intervened and overbore her resolution; nevertheless, Gerard added with satisfaction, she was reconciled on her death bed.

Apart from the personal interest of this remarkable missionary, the *Autobiography* is a social document of the first importance, which gives a vivid picture of a minority viciously persecuted for religion; it is full of graphic details of life in the greater houses; and it throws much light on the working of the prison system.

Fr. Caraman's competent but unobtrusive work as editor may escape notice. His translation into modern English is excellent, while on every page the commentary illuminates the text and corroborates its accuracy from sources which Gerard never knew.

The final thought which this *Autobiography* provokes is that the time has now come for the full story of the religious terror under Elizabeth and James to be retold for the general English reader, who is nowadays—thanks to certain modern events—in a far better position to understand the true significance of these distressful days.

G. B. HARRISON

A SPIRITUAL ODYSSEY

The Pillar of Fire, by Karl Stern (Michael Joseph 15s).

IT has been said that almost every adult could write an interesting and readable autobiography if he had a selective and critical mind and literary skill; and there is something to that. It would be equally true, I think, that any educated convert could describe the various stages of his spiritual pilgrimage in a way which would, or should, interest and benefit the reading public.

Dr. Stern's book is, in my opinion, an outstanding success from both points of view; i.e., it is a fascinating essay in autobiography and a most illuminating account of how a brilliant scientist can cross the arid wastes of Marxism and arrive at Rome, putting up *en route* in the comforting half-way house of orthodox Judaism.

Very few of us in this country have much idea of what life was like in Germany between the two wars and how the Hitler régime, before the extermination camps got busy, affected the private lives of those German citizens who were in any sense regarded as Jewish by

the Nazis. All this is related with consummate skill, humour and humanity by Dr. Stern. Very few Catholics anywhere are aware of the beauties of the Jewish way of life. Dr. Stern gives a sympathetic and entirely unsentimental account of all this and much more.

I should like to conclude this review by quoting verbatim from a letter from a non-Catholic friend of mine to whom I lent the book, as her reactions, as an outsider, should be of interest and value to the Catholic reader.

"I have read this book with great interest (so has my husband). Stern's constant reference to music when enlarging and illustrating his ideas made me feel 'at home' with him all through the book.

"It is illuminating to follow another 'outsider's' approach to the Church. Some of his reflections must, I think, be characteristic of many who feel the 'lure of belonging there' of which he speaks, yet remain only on the threshold.

"I am particularly interested in passages where he describes his first feelings that there was a lack of social consciousness and conscience which had moved him amongst the earliest communists and sincere social revolutionaries. He speaks of the original passion for justice, that religious sense of identification with the poor, which had been so apparent in their earliest leaders. The accepted ghastly poverty in Catholic countries repelled him.

"I found it convincing when Stern reasons why the sense of social and racial justice is so natural to the convert and why he is bewildered that these ideas take such time and effort to become rooted in the consciousness of Catholic people. He finds it hard to think of God in other but social terms—a Charity detached from social implications.

"The present age could well be a turning point, for the Catholic Church seems alive as never before to the social elements of the Gospel which have been disguised in Marxism. I have heard many intelligent non-Catholics remark that the greatest hope against Communism is the Catholic Church, for in it lies all that was best in the original Communist ideal. An authoritative religion can best combat and replace an authoritative ideology. Catholics suffer the same kind of persecution from Stalin's secret police that the earliest Communists suffered under the Tsarist régime. Perhaps here lies a hope for the future.

"Stern points out that the Catholic Church, being a church of the multitude, an outsider approaching her faces a thick layer of mediocrity before glimpsing the world of Newman, St. Thomas and St. Augustine. It is a long journey. I am always glad when you lend me books or give me contacts that help me on my way, for the Poets and Teachers whom I loved and looked to in my formative years were all non-Catholics."

E. B. STRAUSS

RUM THING THE BRAIN!

Doubt and Certainty in Science, by J. Z. Young (Oxford University Press 7s 6d).

MR. J. Z. YOUNG is a zoologist with a special reputation in experimental neurology. For this he has been made both a Fellow of the Royal Society and a professor of anatomy in the University of London, although he is not a medical man. He gave the Reith Lectures of the B.B.C. for 1950, taking eight half-hours to do so. They are collected in this book, together with a preface and certain interpolated chapters of commentary by the author. He has derived the general tone of his discourse (he states) from the tradition of British empiricist philosophy.

Professor Young defines "doubt" as "a search for general schemes into which to fit observations"; he nowhere defines certainty. Neither term appears in an index of some two hundred headings. In his preface he invites the reader to read through the whole book in order to get a general view of his thesis. A twofold carrying-out of this exercise leads one to gauge this thesis much as follows.

Man is pre-eminently a communicating animal. His brain is the chief instrument of this communication. Its structure recalls that of a cybernetic (or "feed-back") electronic calculator. Hence there is probably no such thing as a "person," in the accepted sense of that word. A chief cause of the shaping of the brain into an instrument of communication was the habit of ancient men of gathering on or around hills—or somewhere else. A proper regard for these propositions, jointly and severally, enables us to dispense with such notions as "soul," "will," "consciousness," "creation" and "God." Evolution was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.

It is difficult to believe that these lectures were not a leg-pull, a protracted irony, intended to be put beside *Brave New World*. But it is not so. We have here a distinguished biologist letting down his hair and explaining to his colleagues and to the layman how all this business of the Ego is but a relic of the Middle Ages, and due mostly to the way our nurses talked to us when we were very young. Brains, it seems, are the real thing. It seems also that these brains belong to things called "observers," and that the observers are governed by certain "rules" set up by the brains. It is all very confusing.

It is also a pity. For the purely scientific parts of the book are very good indeed. Some of the neurophysiological parts of it are as stimulating to the professional as they are informative to the layman. When he talks of the working of the nervous systems of man and lower animals, Mr. Young is a model of clear and simple language; the teacher will find much to help him here. His account of the behaviour

of men born blind, but later given sight by an operation, is of the utmost interest. So also is his *précis* of Penfield's book upon that surgeon's humane experiments on the cerebral cortex of conscious men—a book, by the way, that should be in the library of all psychologists. Young's notion, that "pleasure" is a cognition of "order" and "displeasure"—he calls it "pain"—a cognition of "disorder," is valuable and in full accord with the spirit of Christian philosophy.

The fact appears to be that both the original lectures and the book itself were expanded far beyond the author's special competence. Three lectures to illustrate the resolution of doubt into scientific certainty, using the excellent experiments upon the octopus by the author and Mr. Boycott as examples, would have probably covered the original plan, in so far as this is indicated by the title chosen for the series. Or again, the interdependence of the "mental" and the "physical" could have been well shown by confining the data to the human material dealt with in the talks. But the author has clearly felt impelled to expand his theme to cover a general philosophy of animals and man, and must be judged accordingly. It must suffice to take his case upon two counts: his general knowledge of medieval philosophy, upon which he lays considerable stress; and his particular notions upon the Will.

The notion of a creation *ab aeternitate* did not arise with Mr. Young, nor even in this century; nor is it dependent upon any hypothesis of evolution. St. Thomas (as most writers on this topic know) could not rule it out upon logical grounds. In any case, our writer does not appear to have grasped the distinction between a "creation" and a "beginning in time." The essence of a creation is a certain relation of dependence between the world and God. Since Mr. Young rejects one term of this relation (God) it can scarcely be expected that he would accede to our definition of creation. This, however, does not excuse his placing Ussher's calculated date for the Creation (4004 B.C.) among the chronological feats of the Middle Ages. His use of the term "Middle Ages" leads one to think that it is merely a courteous term for Catholic. He has clearly tried to be kind to theologians. Now one should never be kind to theologians: to be just is enough.

Mr. Young's weakness in his discussion of metaphysical questions appears particularly in his rejection of the concept of Will. And this rejection appears to be a special case of his rejection of the notion of "concept" itself. He is, of course, true to his espousal of empiricism in so rejecting it. For him, so far as his book lets us judge, the notion of the general idea is replaced by an operation of "measuring" perceived data against certain "patterns" of action in the central nervous system—he calls them "rules" of the brain. He does not profess to be wholly satisfied with this reduction, but he does seem to think that it

is right in essence. The trouble appears to arise from his considering Man to be pre-eminently the *communicating* animal, whereas Man is in fact the uniquely *conceptualizing* animal. By virtue of this conceptual faculty he can enjoy a more accurate form of communication with his fellow men than does, say, one cat with another. He can, for example, make "red" stand either for a class of perceptibles or for a complex of social and political ideas: that is, either for a concept based on images or for a concept based on concepts—he has that set of languages of different orders upon which milord Russell has written so engagingly. Mr. Young does not know that the exercise of Will is essentially an immanent act (of choice), not *necessarily* followed by bodily action; for such bodily action may be impossible, as in the hemiplegic, or determined by some outsider cutting in on the cerebrospinal "line," as did Penfield in his experiments. Our knowledge of our wills, like our knowledge of our Egos, is an "immediate" act, more direct than any scientific knowledge—to use the word "scientific" in its current sense. If we reject this immediate kind of knowledge, how are we to justify the acceptance of conclusions based upon the more indirect kind? In both cases the validity is ultimately based upon a consensus of agreement amongst human beings. Moreover, many arguments leading to a rejection of the notion of Will are based upon the notion that it involves a constant interference with the "physiological" order of behaviour and causation. No one who knows the elementary teaching of Catholic moral theologians upon the set of conditions requisite for the sinfulness of an act will need to be told that the exercise of the faculty of will is "extraordinary" rather than "ordinary" in human affairs: so that the attempt of neurologists to find physiological springs for our customary behaviour is as acceptable to developed Western theology as it is to developed Western science—and has been since the High Middle Ages.

Doubt and Certainty in Science is, therefore, a book to put upon the shelves both of the Christian apologist and of the reflective politician. It is a fair example of the deliquescence of philosophical thought that was bound to follow the exhaustion of the empiricist approach to human biology; and it is a fair example of the kind of thing that prepares the intellectuals of a community for the seed of Marxism—however much its author be devoted to the ideals of freedom of thought and action.

M. A. MACCONAILL

SHORTER NOTICES

The Virgin and the Child, edited by Elizabeth Rothenstein (Collins 12s 6d).

MRS. JOHN ROTHENSTEIN has conceived and executed a difficult feat: without either pretension or sentimentality she has collected together a score or more of masterpieces illustrating the Nativity, and matched them with a careful choice of poems. Neither the pictures nor the stanzas are spoiled by over-familiarity, and a series of short notes makes plain both provenance and meaning, whenever the latter is in doubt—as, for example, in one or two early texts.

The publishers have served Mrs. Rothenstein well, for the book is handsome and it is inexpensive. Her selection gives every evidence of a taste both wide and certain. Thus, for several of the illustrations she has chosen one detail from a larger whole—a procedure which has helped the block-maker by giving him more room and at the same time allows the reader to concentrate on essentials. At its best this choice leads to such juxtapositions as that of exactly the right fragment of Botticelli's Nativity from the National Gallery facing a Carol by Mr. Gerald Bullett, a stanza from Mary Coleridge, and Thomas Hardy's *The Oxen*. Sometimes, as in this instance, the notes compress too much into too few words. "Thomas Hardy was, of course, an atheist," is Mrs. Rothenstein's comment—which can hardly be thought adequate for a writer of whom Lord David Cecil has written, less brusquely, "Though his intellect accepted rationalism and materialism, his imagination never did."

This is a small matter, however. And it will do little to impair the pleasure which can be gained from a choice of pictures ranging from the Cologne School to Velazquez, and of poems from the Song of Songs to Mr. F. T. Prince, each carrying beautifully forward their theme of promise.

ALAN PRYCE-JONES

The Middle Ages in the West, by The Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Slessor, P.C. (Hutchinson 21s).

IN this book Sir Henry combines a detailed narrative with a broad philosophical approach. So successful is he in his broad analysis and appraisal of what constitutes the achievement of the Middle Ages that one doubts the wisdom of including a rather detailed history of medieval Europe. In point of fact the detail tends to blur the excellent drawing of the broad outlines; it also suffers from a defect inevitable owing to the limitations imposed by a single volume, that of incompleteness and over-simplification.

The author does succeed in giving the reader a real insight into medieval life and thought. He is no enthusiastic sentimentalist attempting to depict a golden age. He is a scholar and philosopher approaching his subject in an objective and critical manner. He describes a civilization inspired by the Church, whose foundations were firm and whose principles were sound, however imperfect may have been their realization in practice. With unerring judgment he seizes upon the vital issues, lays bare the important principle underlying a confused medley of facts and strivings, and invariably gives the proper historical emphasis and perspective.

Reflecting upon the chaos of modern times and upon the necessity of some principle of unity Sir Henry says: "The future will decide whether the material necessity of union or the possession of a common Catholic morality and metaphysic is the more compulsive and enduring." Readers of his *Middle Ages in the West* will have no difficulty in deciding for themselves for they will have received an appreciation of what "a common Catholic morality and metaphysic" did achieve, and can achieve.

The Dividing of Time, by Elizabeth Sewell (Chatto and Windus 10s 6d).

AFTER exquisite short stories scattered in various journals (including THE MONTH) and an erudite essay in criticism called *The Structure of Poetry*, Miss Sewell has now published something which she pleases to call a novel but which her dustcover more enlighteningly describes as an "exorcism of unhappiness." Her Civil Service heroine constantly slips out of this real world into another where the dreams of time past mingle with those of time present, "so that she moves amongst strange menacing or consoling figures, through a tyrannical city built round a black Cathedral, an enchanted wood, the castle of the moon, the cave of seven sleepers."

In a prose analysis this sounds forbidding, and it is forbidding if as a practical man you demand at least an appearance of reality in your novels. Shakespeare at his most fantastic, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or *The Tempest*, did give us various levels at which we could understand him, at lowest the plot which a child can enjoy and above layer on layer of meaning which no amount of reading or playing can exhaust. Miss Sewell omits the lowest level.

On the other hand in this century of the cloth-capped and the bowler-hatted, so preoccupied with purges and export drives and costs of living, a joyous and fastidious reminder of the dignity and destiny of the individual is rain to arid roots.

The Structure of Complex Words, by William Empson (Chatto and Windus 21s).

IT is strange that one can apparently comment upon one structure only by creating another. Only form can be laid alongside form by way of approach and elucidation, as anyone knows who has handled mental structures. From this follows an understanding of what Valéry meant by saying there is no definition but by construction, or of that critic who maintained that the only possible way to comment on a poem was to write another poem. There are those who do not look at language or literature in this way, but they will probably be sufficiently deterred here by Mr. Empson's title, perhaps even by Mr. Empson's name with its past record of sevenfold ambiguity. Those, however, who habitually play with words and enjoy contemplating their playthings will know what to expect.

The writer introduces his own playthings, "my little bits of machinery," in the first two chapters, certain symbols to express variations in the meaning structures of particular words according to sense, implication, emotion, mood. These are then applied, without uncomfortable laboriousness, in the more literary investigations which follow, examinations of key words in Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Wordsworth and Jane Austen, though with Mr. Empson's habitual wideness of range. The work ends with more general topics, a chapter on "A is B," and one on "The Primitive Mind," suggestions for lexicographers and an Appendix on Value-Theories.

The individual examinations, particularly that into the notion of "fool" and "folly" in *Lear*, produce interesting results; good debating points are raised, such as the suggestion that a Shakespearean character may be a commentary on a word rather than vice-versa, or that the more one respects the rational the more one must fear irrationality. But, as with Mr. Empson's previous work, the book as a whole leaves one with an impression of inadequately resolved complication. Curiously enough, it is structure that is lacking, an over-all certainty of form which alone can fully engage the reader's mind. If the writer were a mere lexicographer, one would not ask him for anything more than a collection of items of reference; but he is not. The mysterious excitement generated by the building-up of a structure, by artist or critic, is lacking, and the result is that we have the feeling of being observers rather than participants, while Mr. Empson plays, over 400 pages, a game with himself.

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